

50

**to improving
your Grammar**

STEPS

Study Book

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Garnet
EDUCATION

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Introduction



'Ill-fitting grammar are like ill-fitting shoes. You can get used to it for a bit, but then one day your toes fall off and you can't walk to the bathroom.'

Jasper Fforde (1961–)
British novelist

Overview of this book

50 steps to improving your grammar is different to many of the grammar books which you may have read before. Many grammar books are long, full of text and have long, complicated explanations. The idea of reading one of these books is unexciting. *50 steps to improving your grammar* tries to build on the success of the approach used in *50 steps to improving your academic writing* by presenting key information in a simple, easy-to-follow format, where there are lots of opportunities to practise what you have learnt. It is hoped that this approach to learning grammar will make the whole process more interesting.

Structure of the book

The 50 steps in this book are divided into ten units (A–J), each of which contains five steps. Each unit has a different area of grammatical focus, representing the major areas of English grammar. By the end of the 50 steps, you should understand why grammar is important, be confident in knowing how to use the different word classes (e.g., nouns, verbs, adverbs) and have a clearer idea of what grammar to use in different situations. The ten units of the book are listed below. The specific steps can be found in the Contents on page **XXX**.

Unit A. What is grammar?

Unit B. How can I use nouns and pronouns effectively?

Unit C. How can I use verbs effectively?

Unit D. How can I use adjectives and adverbs effectively?

Unit E. How can I use other word classes effectively?

Unit F. How can I write good sentences?

Unit G. What grammar should I use for specific purposes?

Unit H. What general grammatical issues do I need to consider?

Unit I. How can I punctuate and spell correctly?

Unit J. What is academic grammar?

Structure of each step

Each step is made up of four pages and follows the same pattern, which is as follows:

Quotation

Directs you to the key learning point of the text and familiarizes you with the subject (see above).

A. Reflection (1/2 page):

Evaluates your existing understanding of the topic through targeted questions.

B. Contextualization (1/2 page):

Demonstrates the importance and relevance of the topic through a presentation of the learning point in context.

C. Explanation (2 pages):

Explains the topic in detail, delivered by answering the specific questions posed in Part B. The structure of each step is 'interrogative'; that is, each section asks you a particular question, which it then answers. In Part C, you will also come across a number of special features, designed to increase your understanding of the subject matter, namely:

- *Glossary link*: shows you that this word or phrase is found in the extensive Glossary at the back of the book. The Glossary provides definitions about key grammatical terms used in the text. The first time each term is used in Part C, it is highlighted in red.
- *Example sentences from Parts A / B*: are often examined in more detail in Part C. These sentences are highlighted in green.
- *Grammar box*: provides useful lists of information and additional examples.
- *Answer box*: gives answers to questions asked in Part A / Part B which are not answered in the text.
- *Note*: gives information which you may already know, but which is relevant to the point being discussed.
- *Top Tip*: provides useful advice, often related to common problems.
- *Links to steps*: indicates other steps (e.g., ►Step 17), where this information is also discussed and analyzed.
- *Summary box*: summarizes the step in three key points.

D. Activation (1 page):

Application of what you have learnt through a range of test activities.

The answer key to the questions posed in Part D Activation of each step can be found on pages XXX-YYY. The Glossary can be found on pages XXX-YYY.

The English used in this book

The two main varieties of English referred to in this book are British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) as they are both commonly taught in the classroom.

(Editor's note: this book is predominantly written in BrE, but with AmE *-ize* rather than BrE *-ise* spellings.)

How to use this book

Each of the steps should take you between 45 minutes and one hour to complete (roughly 10–15 minutes for Parts A and B, 20–25 minutes for Part C and 15–20 minutes for Part D). Exactly how long you spend will depend on the precise details of the step and your existing level of knowledge.

The structure of the book means that you can decide how best to use it. If you are already aware of your areas of weakness in grammar and feel you only need support in certain key areas, then you should focus on those particular steps. If, however, you feel you need more support, it will be more beneficial to follow through the book from beginning to end. However, each step is 'stand alone', meaning that it makes sense if you look at it in isolation.

However you use this book, it is important that you try to apply what you learn as much as you possibly can. As noted at the beginning, grammar is not something theoretical which you can just learn for tests and then forget. To improve the quality of your speaking and writing in English, you must constantly try to apply the knowledge and skills you gain.

What is grammar for and why is it important?



'Grammar is the greatest joy in life, don't you find?'

Lemony Snicket (1970–)

American author (real name Daniel Handler)

A Reflection

Why did you buy this book? Explain your reasons in the box below.

B Contextualization

In 1979, William Safire wrote his 'Fumblerules of Grammar'. Fifteen of these 'rules' are outlined below, showing some of the most common grammatical mistakes in English.

Read the 'rules' and identify what grammar problem he is talking about in each case.

When you have done this, think about whether you make any of these mistakes in your own speaking or writing.

1. Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read.
2. Don't use no double negatives.
3. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
4. Use the semicolon properly, always use it where it is appropriate; and never where it isn't.
5. Reserve the apostrophe for it's proper use and omit it when its not needed.
6. No sentence fragments.
7. Avoid commas, that are not necessary.
8. A writer must not shift your point of view.
9. Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!
10. Hyphenate between sy-llables and avoid un-necessary hyphens.
11. Write all adverbial forms correct.
12. Don't use contractions in formal writing.
13. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
14. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
15. capitalize every sentence and remember always end it with a full stop

Write each number from the list above in the appropriate column, according to the type of mistake which is being made.

Using the incorrect form of the word	Using an incorrect sentence structure	Using punctuation incorrectly	Using poor style
3	6	1	2

c Explanation

Why did you buy this book?

People want to learn English – and English grammar – for many reasons. You may be studying English at school; you may need to improve it to perform well at university; you may need it in your work or business life; or you may need it for conversations with friends or a loved one. Indeed, you may need it for a combination of these reasons. Whatever the reason(s), it is very useful to know what you are trying to get out of this book at this early stage. If you do this, you are likely to be more motivated in your study; if you are more motivated, you are more likely to learn more and become better at using English grammar. It may also help to think about any specific grammar problems you have, so you know some of the particular areas you need to address.

What areas of grammar will this book focus on?

- As the name suggests, this book provides a step-by-step guide to help you improve your grammar. To do this, it tries to:
- build on your existing knowledge of grammar;
- focus on the most important areas of grammar that will help you communicate more effectively in English;
- check your understanding of these key areas of grammar with clear activities and exercises;
- show you that English grammar is not as difficult as you might think.

Why is grammar important?

Take a look at the quotation at the beginning of this step. Now consider whether you agree with it or not. The answer to this question is probably no. For most people, grammar is **not** the greatest joy in life. In fact, for many people grammar is difficult and confusing. And, since you have bought this book, you may well disagree with this statement! However, even if you do find grammar difficult, it is still very important for improving your English. Three of the most important reasons why grammar is important are as follows:

1. **Good grammar helps make your meaning clear.** If your writing contains grammatical mistakes, it may be difficult to understand exactly what you mean. Small grammatical mistakes can have a significant impact on the meaning of what you say. This is particularly important in English, where the majority of people who use it are not **native speakers**. The possibility of misunderstanding is therefore higher.
2. **Good grammar helps you look professional.** Good grammar definitely helps to create a good impression. People often react negatively to speech or writing which contains a lot of grammatical mistakes. If you want to use your English to impress people, you need good grammar.
3. **Good grammar means that people take you more seriously.** If you make regular grammatical mistakes in how you say something, people may also assume that what you say is also not worth listening to. Although this may not be true, people may make this assumption.

What are some common grammatical problems, and how will this book address them?

William Safire's list of grammatical problems highlights some of the main types of grammatical problems which students of English face. The purpose of this book is to help you solve these and many other problems. The 15 specific problems identified can be categorized as follows:

Using the incorrect form of the word	Using an incorrect sentence structure	Using punctuation incorrectly	Using poor style
3, 11, 13	6, 14	1, 4, 5, 7, 10, 15	2, 8, 9, 12

The Fumblerules are corrected (highlighted in yellow) in the table below. In each case, an explanation of the problem is given, and links to the various steps in which this issue is discussed are given. Note that in some cases more than one correction is possible.

Rule	Correction(s)	Solution / Comments
1	Avoid run-on sentences. They are hard to read.	A full stop is used to separate the sentences . A semi-colon could also have been used (►Steps 41 and 43).
	Avoid run-on sentences because they are hard to read.	Conjunctions can also be used to link clauses together (►Step 21).
2	Don't use any double negatives.	Where there is already a negative in the sentence (i.e., <i>don't</i>), no further negative is needed – so use a positive forms instead (i.e., <i>any</i>) (►Step 34).
	Use only a single negative.	An alternative is to invert the sentence and write it in a positive way.
3	Verbs have to agree with their subjects.	The subject is plural, so the auxiliary verb should also be plural (►Step 36).
4	Use the semicolon properly; always use it where it is appropriate and never where it isn't.	A semi-colon separates independent clauses , meaning that it is more like a full stop than a comma (►Steps 41 and 43).
5	Reserve the apostrophe for its proper use and omit it when it's not needed.	Apostrophes are used in two main ways – to show missing letters and for possession. The first its is a possessive pronoun , whilst the second one is the contracted form of <i>it is</i> (►Step 41).
6	There should be no sentence fragments.	Every sentence needs a subject and a verb (►Step 29).
7	Avoid commas that are not necessary.	Commas are commonly misused, even by native speakers (►Step 42). The problem here is that the comma is preceding a defining relative clause and they can only come before non-defining relative clauses (►Step 28).
8	A writer must not shift his or her point of view.	Consistency is important. In this example, the subject 'writer' is 3 rd person and so the pronoun should also be 3 rd person (not <i>your</i> , which is 2 nd person) (►Step 7).

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Why is grammar important? Summarize in your own words.

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2. Check your understanding.

Sentences 1–5 contain similar mistakes to the ones outlined in Part B. Match them up with the feedback given in a–e.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. No verb, no sentence | a. This is a run-on sentence. This means that two sentences are incorrectly combined as one. |
| 2. Full stops are needed at the end of a sentence
this is important | b. It can be confusing to overuse negative forms. Use positive forms where possible. |
| 3. The use of negative forms doesn't make your English any clearer | c. The verb does not agree with the subject. |
| 4. The use of longer noun phrases at the start of a sentence are confusing | d. Contractions and exclamation marks are considered to be informal. |
| 5. Don't use informal grammar in written English! | e. This is a sentence fragment, meaning that it is not complete. |

3. Create your own.

Rewrite sentences 2–5 above in a more appropriate, grammatically correct way.

Example: 1. No verb, no sentence – Every sentence must contain a verb.

2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

What are word classes?



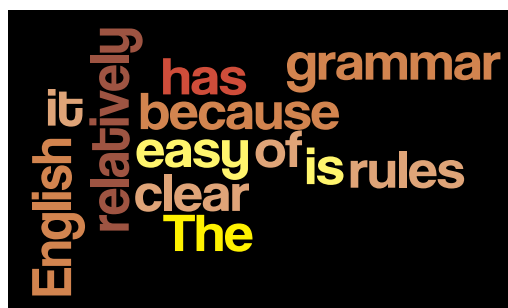
‘Then suddenly, he was struck by a powerful but simple little truth, and it was this: that English grammar is governed by rules that are almost mathematical in their strictness!’

Roald Dahl (1916–1990)

British novelist, short story writer, poet and screenwriter

A Reflection

Rearrange the following words so that the sentence makes sense.



B Contextualization

Read the following passage. Examples of all the word classes (= parts of speech) of English can be found here.

Two examples of each word class are shown in the table. Write at least three additional words in each group.

Many books about grammar have been published. Although some of them are very clear and easy to follow, many are really difficult to understand. Therefore, many students are bored or scared by grammar. The purpose of *50 steps to improving your grammar* is to change this. I hope it succeeds, because grammar is important.

Each of the steps has four parts: reflection (where you hopefully identify what you already know about the subject), contextualization (where you see that grammar point in context), explanation (where the main points of the step are clearly outlined and explained) and activation (where you practise the points learnt).

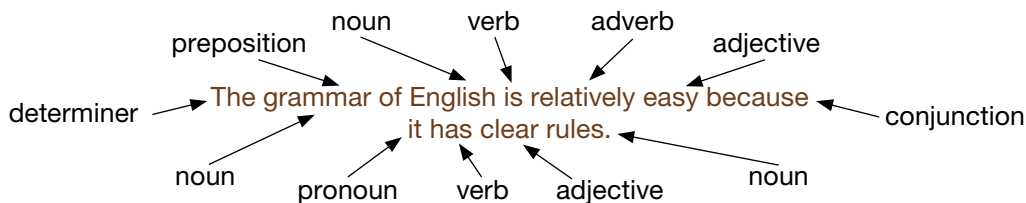
Word class	Examples
Noun	books, grammar ...
Verb	have, published ...
Adjective	clear, easy ...
Adverb	very, really ...
Pronoun	them, you ...
Preposition	about, of ...
Conjunction	although, therefore ...
Determiner	many, the ...

c Explanation

What are word classes?

Word classes (sometimes called ‘parts of speech’) are the basic bricks of language. Each word class has a particular job to perform. For your English to make sense, you need to understand the function of each type of word, and how the different word classes relate to each other. If you do not understand what a word is supposed to do, it is unlikely that you will be able to use it correctly.

There are eight main word classes in English. In some languages, there are clues in the word as to what class it is (e.g., information at the beginning or end of a word). In English, the context is very important. The sentence below, from Part A, contains each of the eight word classes.



The table below shows the functions of these word classes, and provides further examples from Part B. (**Note:** not every word from the text is included.)

Word class	Text examples	Function
Noun	books, grammar , students, purpose, explanation	In its basic, general form, a noun is a person, place or thing. At a more advanced level, it may refer to ideas, feelings, qualities, events and organizations. Nouns are the most commonly used part of speech.
Verb	have, published, are, change, identify	Put simply, a verb is a ‘doing’ or ‘action’ word. It often describes what happens in a sentence.
Adjective	clear, easy, difficult, bored, scared	An adjective describes / modifies nouns and pronouns.
Adverb	very, really, already, hopefully, clearly	An adverb describes / modifies verbs (as well as adjectives and other adverbs).
Pronoun	them, you, it, this, some	A pronoun replaces / represents a noun.
Preposition	about, of, to, by, in	A preposition shows the relationship (e.g., in terms of place or time) between other word classes, most often between nouns and verbs.
Conjunction	although, therefore, or, and, because	A conjunction shows the relationship between clauses in a sentence (e.g., in terms of time, cause and effect, transition, etc.).
Determiner	many, the, each, that, an	A determiner appears at the beginning of noun phrases, telling us whether the information is new or familiar, or how much of something there is.

What is the difference between an 'open' and 'closed' word class?

The word classes noted above can be divided into two major types, namely **open** (or lexical) and **closed** (or functional). Each of these word classes is looked at in more detail in other steps. Word classes which are open are **nouns** (►Steps 6–10), **verbs** (►Steps 11–15), **adjectives** and **adverbs** (►Steps 16–20). Word classes which are closed are **pronouns** (►Step 7), **conjunctions** (►Step 21), **prepositions** (►Step 22) and **determiners** (►Steps 23–25). The two main differences between the two groups are as follows:

- There are a fixed number of words in closed classes. This means that once you have learnt the prepositions, conjunctions, determiners and pronouns of English, you never have to learn any more! However, there are new open class words being invented all the time (e.g., see ►Step 6 for recent nouns, and ►Step 11 for recent verbs).
- Closed class words are also called function or grammar words because their job is to show the relationship between words in the open/lexical class. These words do not describe anything unless they are related to a lexical word. For example, *in*, *on* and *at* do not describe times or places by themselves; they only do this when used in phrases such as *in London*, *on time* or *at school*.

Can a word be in more than one class?

Yes, particularly with nouns and verbs. Many common words can be both nouns and verbs, for example, *answer*, *break*, *cook*, *email*, *face*, *laugh*, *miss*, *order*, *run*, *set*, *train* and *visit*. Some words may also be in more than one closed class, or even be in an open as well as a closed class. For example, *each* can be an adverb (*They cost \$20 each.*) and a determiner (*Each day I learn more.*). *On* can be a preposition (*The TV is on the table.*), an adverb (*Turn on the TV.*) or an adjective (*Your favourite TV show is on.*).

Grammar box: word roots

There may be more than one type of word in each class which has the same **root**. For example, both *cook* and *cooker* are nouns: the former means a person who makes food, whereas the latter refers to the machine in which food is cooked.

How can a word change class?

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
clarity	clear / clarify	clear	clearly
depth	deepen	deep	deeply
help	help	helpful	helpfully
sadness	sadden	sad	sadly
success	succeed	successful	successfully

Many words belong to groups of words which share the same root. One root can be used to make different words which belong to different word classes. Understanding the relationship between these words can be extremely useful for building your vocabulary and avoiding mistakes. The table shows some common examples. Knowing what **suffixes** are usually found in each class can help with word building. Common suffixes for each of the open word classes include:

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (i) Answer this question in 20 words or fewer: *What are the main differences between open and closed word classes?*

(ii) Write the name of a word class in the following gaps.

- a. An _____ adds information to nouns or pronouns.
- b. A _____ shows the relationship between different word classes, usually nouns or verbs.
- c. A _____ shows the relationship between clauses.
- d. A _____ replaces a noun.
- e. An _____ generally provides more information about a verb.
- f. A _____ indicates the action in a sentence.

2. Check your understanding.

What class are the following words in? Use a dictionary if needed.

Note: some words may be in more than one class.

Word	Class(es)	Word	Class(es)
computer		development	
justify		around	
fasten		while	
fast		some	

3. Create your own.

Answer the following questions. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- a. What is the verb form of *computer*? _____
- b. What is the adjective form of *colour*? _____
- c. What is the name of the person whose job is cleaning? _____
- d. What are the noun and verb forms of *special*? _____ and _____
- e. What is the noun form of *refuse*? _____
- f. What is the adjective form of *misery*? _____
- g. What is the adverb form of *obvious*? _____
- h. What is the adverb form of *clear*? _____

What grammar should I learn and how should I learn it?

'Knowing about grammar offers a window into the human mind and into our amazingly complex mental capacity!'

Brock Haussamen (1945–)
Retired English professor, author and social activist

A Reflection

What is your reaction to the following quotations?

I should use the kind of grammar found in books.

I should learn to use the grammar native speakers use.

Making mistakes is a natural part of learning grammar.

Which of the following sentences would you be more likely to say?

Note: these sentences are limited to British English (BrE) and American English (AmE), which are both commonly taught in the classroom.

Have you seen my phone?
My team are winning.
They've gotten a new car.
I'll be home at the weekend.

Did you see my phone?
My team is winning.
They have got a new car.
I'll be home on the weekend

B Contextualization

Each of the sentences below has slightly different grammar from its pair. In each case, identify how the meanings differ.

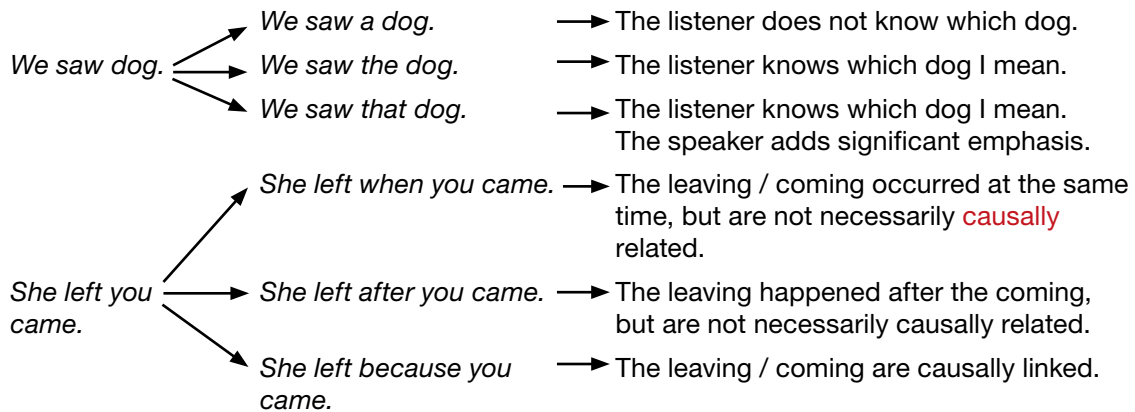
Sentence 1	Sentence 2	Difference in meaning
<i>Sam likes football.</i>	<i>Sam liked football.</i>	Sentence 1: shows Sam's current feeling. Sentence 2: shows this was true in the past, but is no longer the case.
<i>He's leaving tonight.</i>	<i>He may be leaving tonight.</i>	
<i>You're silly.</i>	<i>You're being silly.</i>	

C Explanation

What difference does grammar make to a sentence?

Without grammar, our sentences would not make any sense. If we understood some of the words, we might be able to get a **general** understanding of what was being said, but not a **detailed** one. As the quotation at the beginning of this unit suggests, to be fully human, we need the ability to use complex grammar.

When sentences lack grammar words, it may sometimes be possible to understand their meaning. It is possible to guess the meaning of the example *bus come I late work*. However, we could easily use other grammar words to interpret the meaning of the sentence in a different way, for example: *Although the bus didn't come, I wasn't late for work*. We could also put a range of grammatical words in the other sentences, each of which expresses very different meanings. For instance:



The sentences in the table in Part B clearly show just how important grammar is. In each case, the two sentences have **almost** the same grammar. However, the small differences significantly change the meaning and **emphasis** of each sentence. This can be called the '**butterfly effect**' in grammar. One small flap of the butterfly's wings (i.e., one small grammatical change) can cause a storm (i.e., significantly alter a sentence's meaning).



Sentence 1	Sentence 2	Difference in meaning
He's leaving tonight.	He may be leaving tonight.	In Sentence 1, this is definitely happening – there is a specific plan for him to leave tonight. In Sentence 2, however, it is only a possibility. The modal verb may (►Step 31) changes the meaning.
You're silly.	You're being silly.	Sentence 1 talks about a permanent fact (i.e., You are silly all the time.). In Sentence 2, the silliness is only temporary (i.e., You are not always silly, but you are the moment.).
Do you have a paper?	Do you have paper?	In Sentence 1, the noun <i>paper</i> is countable , being used as an abbreviation for <i>newspaper</i> . In Sentence 2, paper is uncountable (i.e., what you write on).

What kind of English grammar should I learn and how should I learn it?

'I should use the kind of grammar found in books.'

There are two ways in which people view grammar. One group believes that there is a set of specific rules and principles (found in books) which people should follow at all times. Another group believes that language changes over time, and that people should use the kind of grammar which people actually use (found in real life).

This book believes that whilst it is very important to understand the basic rules and 'building blocks' of a language, it also strongly believes that the whole point of learning grammar is so that you can be understood. Therefore, it has to reflect the kind of language people are actually using in day-to-day life.

'I should learn to use the grammar native speakers use.'

The first question to ask here would be: *What kind of native speaker?* Whilst there are many different varieties of English (e.g., British English, American English, Australian English, Indian English), most of their differences are in vocabulary and pronunciation rather than grammar. This said, there are a few noticeable grammatical differences between the two varieties of English which are most commonly taught in the classroom, namely British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). Four such differences are highlighted below.

Grammatical area of difference	British English examples	American English examples
In AmE, the present perfect (►Step 14) is not commonly used – past simple is used instead.	<i>Have you seen my phone?</i>	<i>Did you see my phone?</i>
In AmE, collective nouns (nouns referring to groups of people or things) are grammatically singular. In BrE, they can be singular or plural.	<i>My team is/are winning.</i>	<i>My team is winning.</i>
Past simple and past participle verb forms may differ between BrE and AmE.	<i>dive-dived-dived get-got-got</i>	<i>dive-dove-dived get-got-gotten</i>
The use of prepositions differs between BrE and AmE in particular phrases.	<i>I'll be home at the weekend.</i>	<i>I'll be home on the weekend.</i>

'Making mistakes is a natural part of learning grammar.'

Students of English often get concerned about the number of mistakes they make. However, in the same way that you made mistakes when you learnt your mother tongue, you will also make them when learning another language. It does not matter if you make mistakes, so long as you learn from them. It is important not to get worried or upset if you do make such mistakes – if you do, the speed at which you will learn English will decrease.

Summary

1. Very small changes in grammar can have a significant impact on the whole sentence.
2. You should accept that you will make mistakes when learning grammar – so long as you learn from these mistakes, this is fine!
3. Although there are some grammatical differences between different English varieties, they are not that significant.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Match each person A-E to the correct sentence 1-5.

Woman A

'I now work in an office, but back in 2013 I was a barista.'



Man B

'I am bored in my current job. I'd enjoy serving customers and selling coffee.'



Man C

'I work in an office. I like going to cafés.'



Woman D

'They really liked my interview, and offered me a job. I start tomorrow.'



Woman E

'So that's two coffees, a sandwich and a bottle of water?'



1. He does not work in a café.
2. She's going to work in a café.
3. She's working in a café.
4. She worked in a café.
5. He'd like to work in a café.

2. Check your understanding.

Match the sentences 1-5 from Exercise 1 with their grammatical structures and meaning.

1. He does not work in a café.
 2. She's going to work in a café.
 3. She's working in a café.
 4. She worked in a café.
 5. He'd like to work in a café.
- a. The past simple talks about events which occurred in the past, and are now finished.
 - b. The modal verb indicates a desire or wish.
 - c. The negative word implies the opposite meaning, and the present simple a fact.
 - d. The auxiliary verb shows that there is a specific plan / intention.
 - e. The present continuous describes something which is unfinished.

3. Create your own.

The box below contains open class words. Add as many different combinations of grammar words as you can to make different sentences. One example has been done for you.

answer phone ring

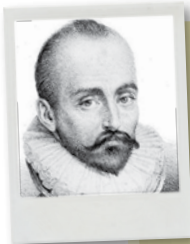
Example: I answered the phone because it was ringing.

Sentence 1: _____

Sentence 2: _____

Sentence 3: _____

Is the grammar of my own language similar to English?



'The greater part of the world's troubles are due to questions of grammar.'

Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592)

French Renaissance thinker, writer and essayist

A Reflection

Complete the following questionnaire about your own language. Try to explain your answers in as much detail as possible. Use the Glossary at the back of the book if you are unsure about the meaning of any of the words used.

Questions about my language	My response
1. What is the normal word order in a sentence?	
2. Is your language inflected? (Do any words in your language change form?)	
3. How are nouns made plural?	
4. Are articles used?	
5. Are there irregular verbs? If so, are they common?	
6. How many different grammatical forms of the verb to eat are there? (e.g., in English = eat, ate, eaten, eats, eating)	

B Contextualization

Now imagine you are completing the same questionnaire for English. For each question in Part A, choose the correct answer from the options below.

Q1	Subject-Verb-Object	Subject-Object-Verb	Verb-Subject-Object
Q2	Yes, commonly.	No, not at all.	To some extent, e.g., for plurals and some verb forms.
Q3	Add ~s.	Put a word like <i>two</i> or <i>many</i> before the noun.	Repeat the word.
Q4	Yes, frequently.	Yes, occasionally.	No, not at all.
Q5	No, all the verbs are regular.	Some verbs are irregular, but they are very frequently used.	Many verbs are irregular.
Q6	Many	Five	One

C Explanation

Why are you asking me about my own language? I thought this was supposed to be a book about English grammar?

Don't worry. This is a book about English grammar. However, a better understanding of your own language, and how it is similar to or different from English, can help you to avoid mistakes. The table below identifies common mistakes made by speakers of five languages and the reasons for these mistakes. Even if your own language is not represented here, you may have similar problems.

How long you have been learning English?'	'I am not coming to school today because I am illness.'	'I go school now.'	'Large is an elephant.'	'Please give me pen.'
				
				
Chinese uses a different word order for questions.	Korean uses word classes differently.	There is only one present tense in Arabic.	Word order is more flexible in Spanish.	There are no articles in Japanese.

It can be very difficult to get rid of some of these problems. The reason for this is that they have become **fossilized**. This means that the mistake has been made so many times that it has become normal. Indeed, many students avoid working on these problems because they are so difficult to eradicate. However, by ignoring them, you are restricting your ability to use English properly.

Therefore, it is important that you try to identify the problems which may be caused by your mother tongue and that you actively try to address these problems. Do not ignore them – they will not go away!

Note: Your mother tongue English

Just as you can experience grammatical difficulties because of the differences between English and your mother tongue, you may also experience problems in other areas, such as vocabulary and pronunciation.

In **vocabulary**, you may discover **false friends** – words which look very similar to a word in your own language, but which have a different meaning.

In pronunciation, there may be certain phonemes (sounds) which exist in English but which do not exist in your mother tongue.

What are the major differences between English grammar and the grammar in my own language?

Don't worry if you find some of the language used in the six points below difficult to understand: the steps in this book address these points in more detail. Follow the references in brackets to find out more about a particular point. Of course, the six points described here do not cover all aspects of English. However, they do show some of the main areas where there are differences between English and other languages.

1. English **word order is usually Subject-Verb-Object** (i.e., who does the action (subject), what the action is (verb), who the recipient of the action is (object)). This can be reversed when using the passive voice (►Step 15), where the order becomes Object-Verb-(Subject).
2. **English is not a particularly inflected language.** This means that English words do not generally change form. (There are a few exceptions, for example **plurals**, 3rd person ~s, past simple ~ed and **present participle** ~ing). In English, relationships between words are shown through function words such as pronouns (►Step 7), prepositions (►Step 22) and determiners (►Step 23).
3. **Plurals in English are formed by adding ~s (or sometimes ~es) to the singular form of the noun.** Depending on the noun, you may also need to change some of the letters at the end of the base form (►Step 45).
4. **Articles (the / a / an), a kind of determiner (►Step 23), are used very frequently in English.** Articles add information about **nouns**, indicating whether the content is known or unknown.
5. **Although the overwhelming majority of verbs in English are regular (i.e., their past and past participle forms end in ~ed), irregular verbs are very commonly used.** It is estimated that although only 3 per cent of English verbs are irregular, they account for 70 per cent of use. The ten most commonly used verbs in English are all irregular (*be / have / do / say / make / go / take / come / see / get*).
6. **The verb system in English is quite easy to understand, especially compared to many other languages.** There are only ever five ways of referring to a verb. For the verb to eat, there is the base form (*eat*), the 3rd person singular form (*eats*), the past simple form (*ate*), the past participle form (*eaten*) and the present participle (*eating*). As ►Steps 6–10 show, the English verb system is regular and easy to follow.

Top Tip:

To understand what specific grammatical problems you might have because of your own language, search the Internet for the following phrase: 'Grammatical differences between English and <your language>'.

Summary

1. Thinking about your own language can help you to identify why you make particular mistakes in English.
2. Some grammatical problems may be very hard to get rid of because you have been making them for such a long time.
3. Some of the major areas to consider when comparing English to your own language are: word order, inflection, pluralization of nouns, use of articles and the verb system.



Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following description of English with relevant words and phrases.

- a. The usual word order of English is _____. This can be reversed when using the _____ voice.
- b. In general, English is not an inflected language, although the addition of _____ to the end of nouns to make plurals or _____ to put verbs into the past simple are examples of inflection.
- c. Although only about 3 per cent of English verbs are _____, this group includes some of the most common verbs. Three common examples are _____, _____ and _____.
- d. The verb system in English is simpler than in many languages. There are only ever _____ ways to write a verb. The forms of eat, for example, are _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____.

2. Check your understanding.

Identify the kind of mistake which is being made in each of these sentences. Correct them as necessary.

Original sentence	Mistake	Corrected version
a. <i>The boy the ball kicked.</i>	word order	The boy kicked the ball.
b. <i>I went to the London last year.</i>		
c. <i>He falled over in the street.</i>		
d. <i>You like playing football?</i>		
e. <i>I am helping to my mother.</i>		

3. Create your own.

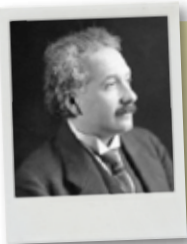
What are three major grammatical differences between English and your mother tongue? Refer to this step or search in a book or online to answer this question.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What is the difference between informal and formal grammar?



'It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education.'

Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

Nobel prize winning German-born American physicist

A Reflection

Look at the following pairs of sentences. Which would be more likely to appear in spoken English, and which in written English?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| I didn't know that. | _____ | Didn't know that. | _____ |
| You've met before, probably. | _____ | You've probably met before. | _____ |
| She's gonna be late. | _____ | She's going to be late. | _____ |
| Anyway, what do you think? | _____ | What do you think? | _____ |

Which of the following do you think is more likely to be the genuine text message? Why?

A

Are we going to meet later? I would like to see you. However, I understand you could be busy.

B

Are we gonna meet later I'd like 2 c u but think you cd be busy.

Which of the following do you think is more likely to be the genuine complaint letter? Why?

A

Dear Sir / Madam,
I have a problem with one of your products. In brief, I took it home and it subsequently broke.

B

Hiya. A problem. Your product – no good! Basically, I got it. It then broke.

B Contextualization

Look at the two passages below. Text A uses the normal rules of English grammar, whilst Text B uses 'international English'. You should think about some of the topics in the box.

Note: all of these terms can be found in the Glossary at the back of the book.

verb forms plurals agreement determiners

C Explanation

What are the major differences between informal and formal grammar?

As the texts in Part A show, there is a significant difference in the type of grammar which is expected in informal and formal circumstances. Informal grammar is more commonly used in speaking and informal writing (e.g., text messages, emails to friends, tweets, Facebook entries), whereas more formal grammar is found in written texts such as essays and letters. Generally speaking, it is good to use the type of grammar which is suitable to the circumstances. As such, the very formal grammar of text message A is inappropriate. The grammar of text message B is more suitable. Similarly, the grammar in complaint letter B is too informal; the grammar of letter A is more appropriate.

This is not to say that written grammar is necessarily better than spoken grammar (or vice-versa). Rather, it is about **genre** – when people receive a text message from a friend, they do not expect it to be written in a very formal way.

The table below highlights some of the key differences between the kind of grammar usual in spoken / informal English, and in written / formal English.

Grammar in spoken / informal English	Grammar in written / formal English
At times, grammar words may be left out, especially when the meaning is clear from the context, e.g., <i>(I) didn't know that</i> – clear from the context; <i>(it/that) sounds interesting</i> . In speaking, people also have the opportunity to ask questions and get clarification.	All grammar words should be included. It is not appropriate to leave out any grammar words. In writing, people only have one chance to make their meaning clear: there is no opportunity for clarification. Therefore, the grammar must be accurate.
Phrases (►Step 27) can exist by themselves. There is no need for every utterance to have a subject and a verb.	Full sentences are needed, using a subject and a verb. If either is missing, the sentence is not complete.
There is a greater tolerance / acceptance of grammatical mistakes, e.g., <i>Shes gonna be late</i> .	There is less tolerance for grammatical mistakes. Sentences are expected to be grammatically correct.
'Discourse markers', the purpose of which is to move between different subjects, are used. Such words include <i>anyway, right, okay, I see, I mean, mind you, well, right, you know, like, actually, basically, what's more, so</i> and <i>now</i> .	These words are not used. In formal writing, topic sentences (the first sentence in each paragraph) indicate a change in subject. When subjects are linked, more formal conjunctions are used (►Step 21).
In speaking there is no punctuation. 'Turn taking' shows when one 'sentence' has finished and another begins. Changes in voice and intonation can also show the relationship. In writing, punctuation such as commas and full stops are not necessarily used.	Punctuation is important, since it shows the relationship between clauses and between sentences. Without punctuation, the meaning may be less clear.

Top Tip:

When writing on a computer, ensure that you use all the software available to improve the accuracy of your written grammar. Most programmes will have a spellchecker, which can help you avoid making unnecessary spelling mistakes. In addition, many programmes will also identify where it thinks you may have made certain types of grammatical mistakes.



What is 'International English'?

International English was previously mentioned in ►Step 3. Also known as *Global English*, *World English* and *Globish*, it has become increasingly common worldwide in recent years. Supporters of international English argue that because most people who use English are actually non-native speakers, 'mistakes' should be more accepted. Language is seen as a combination of vocabulary and basic grammar. Some of the areas in which there may be greater tolerance of mistakes include:

Verbs

- Both regular and irregular **verb forms** can be used in the past (e.g., *kept* / *keeped*).
- Other verb forms (not just the present continuous) can be used to talk about current activity, as long as time words like *now* or *currently* are also used.

Plurals

- Uncountable nouns can be pluralized in the same way as countable nouns (e.g., *There were so many peoples*).

Agreement

- 3rd person singular in the present simple does not take ~s (e.g., *My sister now live there*).

Determiners

Articles are not commonly used (e.g., *We saw statue of Liberty and Empire State Building*).

Top Tip:

If you are ever unsure which form to use, use the more formal form. It is better to be too formal rather than too informal.

Summary

1. The kind of grammar used in spoken and written English differs in a few key areas.
2. It is important to use the correct type of grammar in the correct situation.
3. International English has 'lower standards' of grammar, but as a system it is not generally accepted yet. If in doubt, use more formal grammar.

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Answer the following questions. Answer as concisely as possible.

a. What is genre and why is it important?	
b. Why can you leave out some grammar words in spoken English?	
c. What is a discourse marker?	
d. How can computer software help your grammar?	
e. What is international English?	

2. Check your understanding.

Are the following examples of informal or formal grammar? Do you think it is more likely to be spoken or written?

a. You know, thought it was gr8.

b. Definitely she'll like it

c. Dear Sir, please let me reply to your letter of the 18th

d. Its an amazing film you should see it

e. He choosed to eat chocolate

f. The key focus of my presentation is going to be Europe.

a. <i>written / informal</i>	b.	c.
d.	e.	f.

3. Create your own.

Rewrite each of the sentences above. If they are examples of 'informal' grammar, turn it into 'formal' grammar. If it is 'formal', turn it into 'informal'. An example has been done for you.

Sentence	Rewritten version
a.	<i>Informal – formal: I thought it was great.</i>
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	
f.	

What are nouns and how are they used in English?



'Never use abstract nouns when concrete ones will do. If you mean "More people died", don't say "mortality rose".'

C. S. Lewis (1898–1963)

novelist, poet, academic, literary critic and essayist

A Reflection

A noun can be described as a word which refers to people, places or things.

Read the following passage and underline all the nouns you find.

The United Kingdom is composed of four separate parts, namely England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Its capital is London and the Head of State (and the Governor of the Church of England) is Queen Elizabeth II, who lives in Buckingham Palace. Today, the Queen has little real power. She cannot make laws; that is the work and responsibility of the Houses of Parliament. The most important person in Parliament is the Prime Minister.

B Contextualization

Match the groups of nouns 1–6 to the category a–f which they belong to.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. London, Queen Elizabeth II, Buckingham Palace | a. some of the most common nouns in the English language |
| 2. power, work, responsibility | b. proper nouns (i.e., the names of specific people or places) |
| 3. government, governor | c. countable nouns (i.e., nouns which can be pluralized) |
| 4. part, government, work | d. uncountable nouns (i.e., nouns which cannot be pluralized) |
| 5. queen, law, head | e. nouns which come from the same root |
| 6. Head of State, most important person | f. noun phrases |

c Explanation

What are ten key facts about nouns in English?

1. Nouns refer to people, places and things.

Nouns are the word class which includes:

- People: *Queen Elizabeth II, the Prime Minister*
- Places: *United Kingdom, London*
- Things: *government, head, responsibility*

2. Nouns are content words and an open class.

Nouns are content words – without them, a sentence means nothing. They are also an open class, which means that new nouns are being created on a regular basis (see the Grammar box for three recent examples). Indeed, there are more nouns than any other type of word.

3. When writing any sentence, we must use a noun.

There are two things every sentence needs: a subject (i.e., a noun) and a verb – the ‘doer’ and the ‘thing which is done’. If your sentence doesn’t contain a noun, then it is not a sentence!

4. About 15 per cent of words used in spoken English are nouns.

Although **determiners** (►Step 23) and other **functional** word classes are more frequently used in English, the most commonly used content words are nouns. In spoken English, they constitute about 15 per cent of spoken words. In academic writing, this figure doubles. A very high percentage of noun **usage** is restricted to the 25 most common nouns. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, these are as follows: *time, person, year, way, day, thing, man, world, life, hand, part, child, eye, woman, place, work, week, case, point, government, company, number, group, problem and fact*.

5. One noun can have many different meanings.

When using a noun, it is important that you use it in the right **sense**. For example, here are three of the different ways in which the word **bank** can be used:

- *I need to go to the bank later.* (= place where you keep money)
- *Be careful you don’t fall down the bank.* (= slope going down to a river)
- *It’s going to rain – look at that bank of black clouds.* (= a group, a pile)

6. More than one noun may come from the same word family.

The same word root can produce multiple nouns. For example, **government** (the system) and **governor** (the person who governs) are in the same family.

7. Nouns in English do not have a gender.

In many languages, nouns can be masculine or feminine; some languages also have a neuter gender. In such languages, the articles take the gender of the nouns they precede. This is not the case in English, where the only articles are *the*, *a* and *an* (►Steps 24 and 25). In terms of how pronouns are used, *he* and *she* are only used for male and female people, and *it* is used for almost everything else (►Step 7).

Grammar box: Three recent nouns

approximeeting: a rough arrangement to meet, which is then finalized by mobile phone.

digital afterlife: what remains of a person’s online life after they die.

olinguito: the name given to a newly discovered mammal, living in the forests of South America.

8. It is possible to make new nouns from other word classes.

In some languages this is not possible, but English is quite flexible. For example:

- For verbs, add suffixes such as *-ing* (e.g., *winning is my life*; *eating is my hobby*) to turn the verb into a **gerund** (a noun that looks like a verb).
- With adjectives, add suffixes such as *-ce* (*importance, violence*), *-ity* (*popularity, regularity*), *-ness* (*happiness, laziness*) and *-y* (*difficulty, honesty*).
- You can also place the before an adjective to make it a noun (e.g., *I feel sorry for the poor and the unhappy*).

9. Nouns are often combined with other words to make noun phrases.

At a basic level, this might mean placing an adjective before a noun (e.g., *most important person*), or combining two nouns together with *of* to show possession (e.g., *Head of State*). Making noun phrases like this is more common in formal types of speaking and writing, where you may be talking about more complex ideas. Noun phrases are the specific focus of ►Steps 9 and 10.

10. Generally speaking, nouns are not capitalized.

In some languages, all nouns have a capital letter. This is not the case in English, where only proper nouns are capitalized. Common nouns only have a capital letter when they appear at the beginning of a sentence or in a title (►Step 2).

What are the different categories of nouns?

It is important to know what category or categories a noun falls into as this will affect the grammatical structure of your sentence. For example, if a noun is uncountable, it will generally not have an article; if it is compound, it is necessary to think about how you join the parts together. The main ways that nouns can be divided are as follows:

- **Common noun:** a general class of person, place or thing – the most frequently used type of noun (e.g., *part, government, head*);
- **Proper noun:** the specific name of a person, place or thing (e.g., *London, Queen Elizabeth, Buckingham Palace*);
- **Countable noun:** a noun which can be counted – can be pluralized or have a number put before it (e.g., *queen, law, head*);
- **Uncountable noun:** a noun which cannot be counted – also known as a ‘mass’ noun (e.g., *part, work, responsibility*);
- **Compound noun:** a noun made up of two or more words. There are three ways of making compound nouns, namely:
 - Joining two separate nouns together (e.g., *childhood*)
 - Placing the words next to each other, with a space in between (e.g., *child benefit*)
 - Putting a hyphen between two nouns (e.g., *child-sitter*)
- **Concrete nouns:** a noun which exists physically and can be seen, heard, felt, smelt or heard (e.g., *table, cat*)
- **Abstract noun:** a noun which has no physical reality – an idea, concept, quality (e.g., *love, hope*)

Summary

1. Nouns are the most commonly used content words in English.
2. Nouns have no gender in English.
3. Nouns can be categorized in many different ways; the grammar you use will be affected by the kind of noun you are using.

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Are the following statements about nouns in English true or false? If they are false, correct them accordingly.

	True / False
1. Nouns are functional words, and a closed class.	
2. It is necessary to include a noun in every sentence.	
3. Nouns are more common in academic writing than spoken English.	
4. Nouns only ever have one sense.	
5. Nouns have no gender.	
6. Nouns may be combined with other words to make noun phrases.	
7. Nouns are never capitalized.	

2. Check your understanding

Use a dictionary to answer these questions.

- a. What other nouns are in the same family as *child*? Try to find at least three examples.

- b. Identify three different senses of the noun set.

- c. What are the noun forms of the following adjectives: *modest*, *patient*, *formal*, *careless*?

- d. Some nouns can be used in both a countable and uncountable way. Can you name any?

3. Create your own.

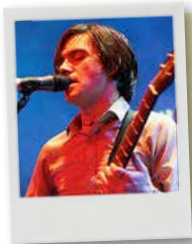
Rewrite the following sentence using nouns.

Example: She was happy when she was a child ... *She had a happy childhood.*

- a. Rich people are getting richer.

- b. I spoke to the person who works at reception.

What are pronouns and how do they work in English?



'Pronouns don't really matter in a song.'

Conor Oberst (1980–)
American singer–songwriter

A Reflection

The pronouns in the following sentences have been underlined. Look at how they are used in English. When you have done this, write a one-sentence definition of their function.

- I cut the paper with the scissors.
- Everyone came.
- Somebody should help.
- The manager himself wrote to me.
- Whose is this pen? Is it yours?
- The bag is hers.
- This is not good enough.
- You must not get help from anybody.
You must do it yourselves.
- That is the car I want to own. One day it will be mine!
- Who won the game?
- What is the capital of France?
- I read about a robot that is able to teach itself language.
- Those are the people who I was talking about.
- Did we win? Was it us?
- Nobody cares.
- Which is your favourite?
- Anything could happen.
- Here's the book that I wanted.
- Did you help them?
- These should be sent first.
- One should do the right thing.
- The pen which you need is there.

In English, pronouns ...

B Contextualization

Describe what each of the following groups of pronouns (taken from the text above) has in common.

Groups of pronouns	What do they have in common?
I, you, we	All are subject personal pronouns
I, mine, me	
me, us, them	
this, that, these, those	
myself, yourselves, itself	

B Explanation

What is the purpose of pronouns in English?

The main function of **pronouns** in English is to replace a noun. Using pronouns will make your English both easier to follow and less repetitive. Repeating the same nouns in a text again and again makes it boring and difficult to read. Therefore, using pronouns is an efficient way of simplifying and clarifying your speaking or writing.

Some learners find pronouns difficult because of the differences between English and their mother tongue. Some languages do not use pronouns. Instead, the same role is performed by, for example, changing the endings of words.

What different types of pronouns are there in English?

The five most common types of pronouns used in English are **personal** pronouns, **relative** pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, **indefinite** pronouns and **interrogative** pronouns. Details of each of these are outlined below:

1. Personal pronouns

In this context, 'personal' is a grammatical term referring the first (*I*), second (*you*) and third (*he/she/it*) person. Personal pronouns can be placed in four categories, namely **subject**, **object**, **possessive** and **reflexive**.

- **Subject:** where the pronoun appears in the subject position (i.e., before the verb): e.g., *I cut the paper with the scissors.*
- **Object:** where the pronoun appears in the object position (i.e., after the verb): e.g., *Was it us?*
- **Possessive:** where the pronoun indicates ownership: e.g., *The bag is hers.*
- **Reflexive:** when the complement (i.e., object) of the verb is the same. These pronouns are often used for emphasis: e.g., *The manager himself wrote to me.*

The following table present a list of all the personal pronouns used in English.

Subject pronoun	Object pronoun	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive pronoun
<i>I</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>mine</i>	<i>myself</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>yours</i>	<i>yourself / yourselves</i>
<i>he</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>himself</i>
<i>she</i>	<i>her</i>	<i>hers</i>	<i>herself</i>
<i>it</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>its</i>	<i>itself</i>
<i>we</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>ours</i>	<i>ourselves</i>
<i>they</i>	<i>them</i>	<i>theirs</i>	<i>themselves</i>

Three key facts about personal pronouns

- In English there is no distinction between 'polite/impersonal' and 'friendly/personal' forms of the second person pronoun (i.e., *you*).
- Note that the group of words often known as possessive adjectives (*my, your, his, her, its, our, your, their, whose*) are not pronouns. The reason for this is that they do not actually replace words, and must be followed by a noun (►Step 23). Possessive pronouns can stand by themselves.

- When using personal pronouns, ensure that the pronouns are close to the noun they refer to. As William Safire says (►Step 1), “place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents.” (Rule 18)

2. Relative pronouns

The relative pronouns in English are *who*, *whom*, *which*, *that* and *whose*. Their job is to provide more information about the noun which comes before. They are discussed in more detail in ►Step 28.

3. Demonstrative pronouns

The four main demonstrative pronouns in English are *this* and *these* (used to refer to things which are near in either space or time) and *that* and *those* (to refer to things which are further away in space or time). Note the slight difference in use of demonstrative pronouns with demonstratives when they are used as determiners (►Step 23). Although the group of words is the same, demonstrative pronouns act as nouns (i.e., they can appear by themselves). For example:



- This is not good enough.* / *These should be sent first.* (= something close to the speaker).
- That shop is now closed.* / *Those apples are tasty.* (= something distant from the speaker)

4. Indefinite pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are used to refer to people or things when the details are unknown or unclear. The suffixes *-body* and *-one* are used for people, and *-thing* for objects, as outlined below.

- Everybody / everyone* = all people; *everything* = all things: *Everybody came.*
- Anybody / anyone* = it doesn't matter who does it; *anything* = it doesn't matter, or it isn't known, what the thing or object is: *Anything could happen.*
- Somebody / someone* = an unspecified person; *something* = an unspecified thing or object: *Somebody should help.*
- Nobody / no one* = *no person*; *nothing* = no things or objects: *Nobody cares.*
- One* is a more formal indefinite pronoun meaning 'anybody including the speaker'. It can be used as a synonym for *I/me*: *One should do the right thing.*

Grammar box: Three key facts about indefinite pronouns

- Indefinite pronouns should be followed by a singular verb (e.g., *Everything is ready*).
- A possessive can be formed by adding 's (e.g., *Someone's phone is ringing*).
- When using *nobody* / *no one* / *nothing*, no additional negative word is needed.

5. Interrogative pronouns

These pronouns are used in questions when the information is unknown (►Step 35):

- What* is used in general questions: *What is the capital of France?*
- Who* is used when asking about a person/people: *Who won the game?*
- Which* is used where there are limited choices: *Which is your favourite?*
- Whose* is used when asking who owns something: *Whose is this pen?*

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (i) Explain, in your own words, the purpose of pronouns in English.

- (ii) Complete the following table with the correct personal pronouns.

Subject pronoun	Object pronoun	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive pronoun
i			myself
	you		
		his	
she			
			itself
		ours	
	them		

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following sentences with an appropriate pronoun.

- We love _____ house. It's the nicest on the street.
- Julia just called to say _____ would be late.
- I haven't seen Terry for years. I'm not sure that I'll recognize _____.
- Don't touch that. It's _____. I bought it ages ago and it's very precious.
- We've only got _____ to blame. We didn't prepare well enough.

3. Create your own.

Rewrite the following text using pronouns wherever appropriate.

The World Cup is a football tournament. The football tournament is played every four years. The football tournament was first played in 1930. Brazil are the most successful side, having won the World Cup five times. Italy have won the World Cup four times. In addition, Brazil and Italy have both been runners-up twice. The fact they have won it nine times is an amazing fact, since all the other countries have only won the World Cup ten times in total.



The World Cup ...

What is the difference between countable and uncountable nouns?



'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.'

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861)
English Victorian poet

A Reflection

Study the following nouns, looking up any words you do not know in an English–English dictionary.

apple flour flower information water equipment television chair reason air

Now write these words in the appropriate part of the table below.

A number <u>can</u> come before the noun	A number <u>cannot</u> come before the noun
apple	flour

B Contextualization

Look at the pairs of sentences below. In some pairs, both sentences are correct; in others, only one of the sentences is possible. Put a tick ✓ next to those which are correct and a cross ✗ next to those which are wrong. Justify your answer in each case.

Example:	
1a. How many apples were on the tree? ✓	1b. How much apples were on the tree? ✗
Justification: <i>Apples</i> is a countable noun (i.e., a number can come before it). Whilst the word <i>many</i> can come before countable nouns, the word <i>much</i> cannot, so (b) is incorrect.	
2a. How many water were in the pool? ____	2b. How much water was in the pool? ____
Justification:	
3a. There were some apples in the tree. ____	3b. There was some water in the pool. ____
Justification:	
4a. He has a lot of hair. ____	4b. He has more than 100 hairs. ____
Justification:	
5a. I have been to the UK three times. ____	5b. I don't have much time right now. ____
Justification:	
6a. How many fruits did you buy? ____	6b. How many apples did you buy? ____
Justification:	
7a. How much coffee would you like? ____	7b. How many coffees would you like? ____
Justification:	

C Explanation

What is the difference between countable and uncountable nouns?

In many languages, there is no distinction between countable and uncountable nouns. This means that it is possible to put a number before every single noun. In English, however, there are some nouns where this is not possible. Such nouns are called uncountable and are a common source of confusion for learners. The list in Part A can be divided into countable and uncountable nouns, as follows

- A number can come before the noun: *apple, flower, chair, reason, television.*
- A number cannot come before the noun: *flour, information, water, equipment; air.*

As you look at this list, you might think that some of these uncountable nouns are actually countable in your own language. *Information* and *equipment*, for example, are countable in many languages. In your mother tongue, therefore, you might be able to say *I used five equipments at the gym*. In English, this is not possible. Instead you must say, for example, *I used some equipment at the gym*, or, alternatively, *I used five pieces of equipment at the gym*.

If you are unsure whether a noun is uncountable or not, ask yourself:

- Can I write a number before the noun?
- Can I pluralize the noun?

If you answer yes in both cases, the noun is countable.



What quantity words can be used with uncountable and countable nouns?

Quantifiers such as *much, many, some* are commonly used with both countable and uncountable nouns. Although the meaning of these words is relatively clear, it is important to know **grammatically** which kind of word they can be combined with. Quantifiers are a type of determiner, and as such are outlined in more detail in (►Step 23). However, a few are presented below with examples.

Quantifiers which can be used only with countable nouns:

none of; a couple of; (a) few; several / a number of; many

- ✓ How many apples were on the tree?
- ✗ How many water were in the pool?

Quantifiers which can be used only with uncountable nouns:

No; not much; little; a little/bit of; much; a great deal of

- ✓ How much water was in the pool?
- ✗ How much apples were on the tree?

Quantifiers which can be used either with uncountable or countable nouns:

a lack of; some; a lot of / lots of / plenty of; all of

✓ There were some apples in the tree.

✓ There was some water in the pool.

Note that when quantifiers are used with a countable noun, the verb is 3rd person plural, but when used with a singular noun, it is 3rd person singular.

Can some nouns be both countable and uncountable?

The answer to this question is yes. However, there may be times when it makes much more sense to refer to a noun as uncountable. While sentence 4b from Part B is technically correct, it sounds very strange. It would be more usual to say sentence 4a. Furthermore, in English, many words can have different **senses**. For example, both sentences 5a and 5b are correct, because a different meaning of *time* is being used in each. In 5a, *time* is being used as a countable noun, meaning how often something happens. In 5b, *time* is being used in a more general, philosophical way. As such, its usage is uncountable. Other common nouns which can be countable or uncountable include: *damage(s)*, *expense(s)*, *light(s)*, *noise(s)*, *paper(s)*, *room(s)*, *sport(s)* and *work(s)*. When using such nouns, it is important to consider exactly what use you are employing.

What do I do if want to pluralize an uncountable noun?

At times, you may be faced with a situation as in sentence 6 in Part B. While 6b is correct, since *apple* is a countable noun, you might actually want to talk about fruit in general, but you know that *fruit* is uncountable, and so it cannot be pluralized. The solution to this is to add one of the many phrases in English which can be put in front of uncountable nouns in order to make them countable. For example:

■ How many **pieces of** fruit did you buy?

By doing this, you are adding a general, countable noun (*piece*) which can be made plural. Fruit can then remain in its uncountable form. Other common phrases which perform a similar job are *types of* and *kinds of*. These phrases can be used with many uncountable nouns.

The key reason for doing this is to avoid the confusion which can come from using quantity words. For example, in response, to the question *Would you like some sugar in your tea?*, the answer, *Yes, please. I'll have **some** sugar*, is not very specific. The listener's and speaker's understanding of the word *some* may be very different. To avoid confusion, the speaker might say *one or two spoons of sugar*.

There are also several specific phrases which can be used for particular uncountable nouns, as shown in the Grammar box. Some of these expressions have a very general meaning and can be used with many uncountable nouns – for example, *grams of* can be used with anything which can be weighed (sugar, cheese, flour) and *bottles of* for anything which can be drunk.

Grammar box: Phrases that change uncountable nouns into countable nouns

*Cups/glasses of water; litres of air;
litres/gallons of petrol/oil; bottles/
glasses of wine; slices/grams of
cheese; pieces/sheets of paper;
megabytes of data; items of furniture;
grains of sand; teaspoons of salt/
pepper/sugar*

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Why were these nouns mentioned in Part C? What point about countable or uncountable nouns were they making?

Nouns	Reason mentioned
a. <i>equipment / information</i>	
b. <i>hair</i>	
c. <i>time / damage / noise, etc.</i>	
d. <i>fruit / apple</i>	
e. <i>coffee(s)</i>	

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following paragraph with appropriate phrases from the box. You should use each phrase only once.

a couple of glasses of some types of not much
two or three teaspoons of many lots of

I like _____ different foods from all over the world, although I prefer the food of _____ countries more than others. In particular, I like Italian food, especially pasta. There are two _____ pasta which I really love: spaghetti and fusilli. I like to eat it with _____ wine. When I don't have _____ work to do, I like to cook, although my wife thinks I use too much salt – but I only put in _____ it. That's _____.

3. Create your own.

(i) Turn the countable words/phrases into uncountable phrases.

a. How many pieces of equipment are in your gym?

b. Could you give me five sheets of paper, please?

c. There were 20,000 people at the match.

(ii) Turn the uncountable words/phrases into countable phrases.

a. She drank a lot of water.

b. How much air can you hold in your lungs?

c. There was no petrol in the car.

How can I make more complex noun phrases (pre-modification)?



'The Americans are very clear, and obsessed with nouns.'

Fiona Shaw (1958–)

Irish actress and theatre and opera director

A Reflection

Read through the following passage and underline any nouns which are pre-modified (i.e., where there are words or phrases which come before the noun, providing more information about it). You should find 14 in all.

The interesting points of the government's budget were as follows:

- Married couples to benefit from increased allowances.
- More money for retired people.
- Reduced salaries for government workers.
- Lower taxes on swimming pools and running machines, to encourage healthier lifestyles.
- A new tax on bank accounts.

B Contextualization

If you are unclear about some of the language used in this exercise, check in the Glossary at the back of the book.

Match each of the noun phrases above to the structures outlined below. Some examples have been done for you.

Structure	Example
Noun + noun (x2)	<i>government workers</i>
Past participle + noun (x4)	<i>retired people</i>
Gerund + noun (x2)	
Determiner + adjective + noun	
Comparative adjective + noun (x3)	
Determiner + possessive noun + noun	

C Explanation

What is a noun phrase?

A **noun phrase** can be defined as a group of words acting together as one unit, in which a noun is the most important word. Noun phrases are important because by adding more information before and after the noun, we can say exactly what we want. The text in the box on the right shows this clearly. This text has kept the main nouns, but has had all the other information removed. The removed information is represented by the Ø symbol. The difference is very obvious. The text is very simple, and lacks important information.

The Ø points of the government's Ø budget were as follows:

- Ø couples to benefit from Ø allowances.
- Ø money for Ø people.
- Ø salaries for Ø workers.
- Ø taxes on Ø pools and Ø machines, to encourage Ø lifestyles.
- A Ø tax on Ø accounts.

How can I create noun phrases?

The two ways of making a noun more complex (= turning it into a noun phrase) is through adding information before (pre-modification) and adding information after (post-modification). The rest of this step focuses on pre-modification, while post-modification is the focus of ►Step 10.

Producing noun phrases can seem very difficult. To make it easier, think of it like blowing up a balloon. You start with your main noun, and gradually add information to it, making it more complex. People often try to create the whole noun phrase in one go, resulting in phrases which make no sense.

When thinking about what information to add to a noun to make it more complex, it can be useful to ask yourself a series of questions. By doing this, you can establish what kind of grammatical structure is required to add this information. The table below outlines this process.



When I was in the park I saw ...

Question about noun	Grammatical structure needed	Noun phrase
Who did the dog belong to?	Add possessive before noun	... my neighbour's dog
What did the dog look like?	Add adjective(s) before noun	... my neighbour's small, black dog
What was the dog doing?	Add gerund before noun	... my neighbour's small, black barking dog
Where was the dog?	Add prepositional phrase after noun	... my neighbour's small, black barking dog in the bushes
What was the dog doing in the bushes?	Add relative clause after noun	... my neighbour's small, black barking dog which was getting its ball in the bushes

This final noun phrase acts as one idea, and can be broken down as follows:

[my neighbour's] [small, black] [barking] [**dog**] [which was getting its ball] [in the bushes]

↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑

possessive noun adjectives present NOUN relative clause prepositional phrase

participle

What are five main ways to pre-modify a noun?

1. Use an **adjective** (a **new** tax)

The most basic strategy to add information to a noun is to use an adjective (►Step 16), which provides more information about nouns. It is possible to use more than one adjective per noun, but when doing so they must follow a specific order (►Step 19). They can also appear in **comparative** (**lower** taxes) or superlative forms.

2. Use a **past participle** (**married** couples, **increased** allowances)

The past participle (~ed form) can work like an adjective. In the examples above, *married couples* is a neater way of saying *couples who are married*. Likewise, *increased allowances* means *allowances which have been increased*. Generally speaking, where past participles can be used before the noun, they are in the passive voice. Other example past participles, along with nouns they could modify, are as follows: **broken** (window); **burst** (pipe); **frightened** (animal); **frozen** (pond); **injured** (player); **married** (man/woman); **reduced** (fee); **retired** (teacher); **rotten** (food); **worried** (parents). Some past participles can only be used when combined with an adverb, for example: a **recently sold** car.

3. Use a **present participle** (**interesting** points)

The present participle can also work like an adjective. The present participle (~ing form) can be used as a pre-modifier when it refers to a permanent quality or characteristic. Some of these participles may work like adjectives (i.e., they can have degrees of comparison, or have an intensifier put before them). Examples include: **boiling / freezing** (point), **disappointing** (news), relaxing (afternoon) **satisfying** (job), **sleeping** (baby). See ►Step 20 for more information about ~ing and ~ed participles being used as adjectives.

4. Other nouns (**bank** accounts, **government** workers)

Nouns can be placed before other nouns to provide more information about them. The function of this structure is often to say that the main noun is part of the noun which comes before. For example, *car window* = *window which is part of a car*. Two specific examples of this type of structure are outlined below:

■ **Gerunds** (**running** machines, **swimming** pools)

Gerunds have the same form as the present participle (see above). In this construction, imagine the phrase *which is used for* is between the gerund and the noun in the opposite order (i.e., *running machine* means *machine which is used for running*). Other common phrases of this type include: *chewing gum*, *cooking equipment*, *dining room*, *ironing board*, *walking stick*.

■ **Nouns which are used as materials**

When describing the material an object is made of, the material can be placed before the object. For example, *gold watch*, *rubber tyre*, *stone floor*.

5. A **possessive phrase** (**the government's** budget)

Phrases which indicate the ownership of the noun can also be used as pre-modifiers. Generally speaking, the 'owner' is followed by 's. Often, a possessive adjective (e.g., *my*, *your*, *her*) may come before (►Steps 7 and 23).

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

What are the five main ways of pre-modifying a noun in English? Complete the table below with as much information as you can recall.

Strategy	Explanation	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put it before a noun. If using more than one, think about order. Comparative / superlative forms also possible. 	
Use a past participle		
		<i>disappointing</i> (news); <i>sleeping</i> (baby)
Another noun		
Possessive phrase		

2. Check your understanding.

Look at the following sentences and identify each of the parts.

Large red car = *adjective + adjective + noun*

- Frozen swimming pool = _____
- Worrying global situation = _____
- Water's boiling point = _____
- My aunt's recently sold house = _____

3. Create your own.

Describe the following pictures using the words in the box below.

happy married	my bicycle's wheel	injured beautiful	gold clock	couple	badly black football player
------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	---------------	--------	-----------------------------------



A _____



A _____



A _____



A _____

How can I make more complex noun phrases (post-modification)?



'If it doesn't turn out right, we can modify it as we go along.'

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945)

American statesman and political leader, 32nd President of the United States

A Reflection

Many noun phrases can be made by joining nouns together with **of**. Create noun phrases using **of** by combining the nouns in the box below. One example has been done for you.

Note: you may need to add determiners for the phrase to make sense.

top	many floors	coffee	oldest	litre	building	water	sound
my brothers	tennis	cup	mountain	group	game	friends	silence

1. Top of the mountain
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

B Contextualization

Match the following examples of post-modification to the description. One example has been done for you.

The **owner of the restaurant**.

Put it on **the table in the kitchen**.

The phone that I got last month is broken.

The man talking in the restaurant.

I'd like **some food to eat**.

There was **food aplenty** at the party.

Noun + adjective

Noun + relative clause

Noun + present participle

Noun + prepositional phrase

Noun + infinitive

Noun + *of* + noun

You should have identified one relative pronoun above (*that*). A list of other words which

C Explanation

What are five main ways to post-modify a noun?

1. Combine with another phrase.

Noun phrases can be combined with other types of phrases (► **Step 27**) to form bigger and more complex noun phrases. Very often, this will be a prepositional phrase (e.g., *in the kitchen*), as in the following example: *Put it on **the table in the kitchen*** (= the table which is found in the kitchen rather than another table in a different room).

of is frequently used to link two nouns together. Some of the main instances in which this particular structure is used include:

- Ownership or possession: *The owner of the restaurant*
- To show group membership: *The oldest of my brothers*
- To link a part to a whole: *The top of the mountain*
- To talk about quantity: *A litre of water*
- For containers: *A cup of coffee*
- After group nouns: *A group of friends*
- To talk about qualities: *A building of many floors*
- General phrases which do not fit other models: *a game of tennis; the sound of silence*

Grammar box: Using *of*

Sometimes these nouns can be placed next to each other. For example, we do not say the centre of the city, but rather the city centre.

2. Use a relative clause.

A relative clause is a common type of dependent clause. They can be used to add detailed information about the noun phrase which comes before. Relative clauses are introduced by a **relative pronoun**. The following words can act as relative pronouns in English: *that*, *which*, *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *what*, *where*, *when* and *why*. They can be used in the following ways:

- **Which / that** are used for things and objects. *That* is more common than *which*, but there are some circumstances where it is not possible to use *that* (e.g., **non-defining relative clauses**): *The phone **that** I got last month is broken*; *London, **which** is the capital of the UK, has 8 million inhabitants*.
- **Who / whom / whose** are used for people. *Who* can be used for either the subject or object of the sentence, whilst *whom* can only be used with the object. *Whose* is used to indicate possession: *The person **who** I saw at the bank was your brother*; *Is **that** the teacher **whom** you were talking about?* *She's the friend **whose** bike I borrowed*.
- **Where** is used for a place or location – *We're moving to the small village **where** I grew up*.
- **When** is used for a time: *Do you remember the day **when** we met?*
- **What** is used to mean 'the thing(s) that': *Take **what** you want*.
- **Why** is used for a reason: *I don't know the reason **why** we came!*

Grammar box: Use of relative pronouns

- When **who/that/which** is the object, it can be left out, e.g., *The computer ~~that~~ I bought*; *the person ~~who~~ I saw at the bank*.
- *Whom* is not very commonly used, even by native speakers. Whilst 'correct', it may be better to use *who* in less formal English. rather the city centre.

More specific information about different types of relative clauses (defining / non-defining) can be found in ► **Step 28**.

3. Use a participle phrase (~*ing* or ~*ed* clause).

Participle clauses can also post-modify nouns as well as pre-modify them (►Step 9). These participle clauses would generally be followed by another phrase, such as a prepositional phrase or adverbial phrase. For example:

- Present participle: *The man talking in the restaurant.*
- Past participle: *The food cooked last night.*

4. Use an infinitive.

An infinitive form of the verb may come after a noun. This may come in the active voice: *I'd like some food to eat*, or the passive: *What is the question to be discussed?*

5. Use an adjective or adverb phrase.

Although 99 per cent of the time adjectives go before the noun they describe, they can occasionally go after the noun as well. For example: *There was food aplenty at the party.*

Can nouns be both pre- and post-modified?

The answer to this is: yes, they can. However, they can be tricky to write. Such complex phrases are common in formal writing, especially academic writing, and can be very useful for clearly expressing your point of view. If you do use pre- and post- modification on a noun, you must ensure it is clear. For example, you could pre-modify the phrase *a group of friends to a large group of friends* and then post-modify to *a large group of friends who have known each other a long time*.

What are five key things to remember when using noun phrases?

1. **Think about language as a series of phrases (rather than as individual words).** This can improve the quality of your speech or writing. Many grammatical problems come from thinking about language as a series of words with no connection to each other.
2. **Think about whether a determiner is needed (►Step 23).** Most noun phrases require a determiner (e.g., an article) before them. As little words, **determiners** are often forgotten, but they are necessary if your English is to make sense.
3. **Don't make noun phrases too long.** If your noun phrases are too long, they will be difficult to follow and understand. Make them complex, but not complicated.
4. **Noun phrases are more common in written rather than spoken English.** This is not to say you should not use them in spoken English, but because of their complexity, you may need time to make the noun phrase accurate.
5. **Collocation is important.** It is important to think what words go together in order to make your writing sound more like a native speaker.

Summary

1. There are five main ways to post-modify a noun, namely: combine with another phrase, use a relative clause, use a participle phrase, use an infinitive and use an adjective or adverb phrase.
2. Nouns can be pre- and post-modified; this is especially common in formal or academic writing.
3. Ensure that you consider whether a determiner is needed for the noun phrase.

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following sentences using the words in the box below.

things	place	which	spoken	time	written
objects	reason	complex	long	passive	that

- Which / that* are used to refer to ____ and _____. _____ is more common than _____.
- Where, when* and *why* can be used in relative clauses, referring respectively to _____, _____ and _____.
- When using an infinitive after a noun, it may come in the active or _____ voice.
- If your noun phrases are too _____, they will be difficult to follow and understand. Make them _____, but not complicated.
- Noun phrases are more common in _____ rather than _____ English.

2. Check your understanding.

- Complete the following noun phrases using the information in the box below. You will not need to use every phrase.

written by my father to help me learn English	different	in the corner whose books are on the table	of the cinema
--	-----------	---	---------------

- Can you see that picture _____?
- This weekend I'd like to go somewhere _____
- I don't like this seat. I'd like to talk to the manager _____
- Do you know whose books are on the table _____?
- This is a book _____
- I received an email _____

- What is the structure of each of the post-modified noun phrases you have created?

(a)	(d)
(b)	(e)
(c)	(f)

3. Create your own.

Write five sentences which include nouns phrases with both pre- and post-modified information.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

What are verbs and how are they used in English?

'This is the time to experience, participate and live your life as a verb.'

Steve Maraboli (1975 –)

Behavioural science academic, author and speaker

A Reflection

A verb can be described as follows: 'a word or phrase that describes an action, condition, or experience' (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>).

Read the following conversation and underline all the verbs you find. One example has been done for.

Tom: Have you been on holiday this year?

Sam: Yes, I visited Spain in June.

Tom: Whereabouts did you go?

Sam: After we'd spent two days in Madrid, we took the train to Barcelona. It was fantastic.

Tom: Would you go again?

Sam: Yes, it was such a great experience. I've been thinking about it all the time since we arrived back. I'm planning to go next year. I'll definitely return to Barcelona.

What are all the different ways of writing the following verbs?

To walk: walk, walks, walked, walking

To go: go, goes, went, gone, going

To eat: _____

To look: _____

B Contextualization

Write the words in the box under the right heading in the table. These words also appear in the Glossary at the back of the book.

past	continuous	future	present participle	perfect continuous
	base form	present	simple	perfect
present simple 3 rd person singular			past simple form	past participle

Tenses (when something happens)	Aspects (how something happens)	Ways of expressing a verb
past	continuous	base form

c Explanation

What are ten key facts about verbs in English?

The following ten facts provide some of the most important things you need to know about using **verbs** in English. Many of these points are then discussed in the rest of this unit (►Steps 12–15).

1. Verbs are **content words, and an **open class**.**

As content words, verbs carry meaning in the sentence. They are also an ‘open class’, which means that new verbs are being created on a regular basis (see the Grammar box for three recent examples).

2. When writing any **sentence, we must use a verb.**

There are two things every sentence needs: a **subject** (i.e., a **noun**) and a verb – the *doer* and the *thing which is done*. If your sentence doesn’t contain a verb, then it is not a sentence! When proofreading, it is important to check that each sentence contains a verb.

3. About 15 per cent of words in English are verbs.

There are tens of thousands of verbs in English, but many of these verbs are either very rare or obsolete (i.e., no longer used). A very high percentage of verb usage is restricted to the most common 25 verbs. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, these are as follows: *be, have, do, say, get, make, go, know, take, see, come, think, look, want, give, use, find, tell, ask, work, seem, feel, try, leave, call*. Notice how all of these words are simple – with only one **syllable**!

4. Some verbs can also be found in other **word classes.**

Most commonly, words which are verbs can also appear as nouns. From the list above, for example, we could write the following pairs of sentences:

As verb	As noun
Come on, let’s play. You can go first.	Come on, let’s play. It’s your go .
Have you been working ?	Have you been doing your work ?
I’ll call you later.	I’ll give you a call later.

5. English verbs are not heavily **inflected.**

Many languages are ‘inflected’, meaning that letters are added to the beginning, middle or end of verbs to change their meaning. English, however, does not have much inflection. Instead, it uses **auxiliary verbs** (►Step 12). The only inflection in English regular verbs is as follows:

- To form the 3rd person of the present simple (+ ~s)
- To form a past simple form or past participle (+ ~ed)
- To form the present participle or a gerund (+ ~ing)

Grammar box: Three recent verbs

Self-interrupt: to stop working briefly and check email/social media

Teletreat: to provide medical advice remotely, via computer

Squee: to squeal in delight or excitement

6. When deciding which verb form to use, we must decide when it happens.

This is known as **tense**.

There are three ways of expressing when something happens:

- **the past** (what has happened)
- **the present** (what is happening now, or what generally happens)
- **the future** (what is going to/will happen).

More information about this can be found in ►Step 13.

Note

Sometimes the word *tense* is used to refer to **past simple** or **present continuous**. This book will use the phrase *verb form* instead. Tense refers to the idea of time.

7. When deciding which verb form to use, we must decide how it happens. This is known as **aspect**.

There are four ways of expressing how something happens:

- **the continuous** (unfinished activity)
- **the simple** (unfinished activity, states and events)
- **the perfect** (activity before a point in time)
- **the perfect continuous** (unfinished activity before a point in time)

More information about this can be found in ►Step 13.

8. There are only five ways of expressing a verb in English.

In some languages, there are hundreds of ways of expressing a verb, in many different forms. In English, there are only ever five. Take, for example, verbs such as *look* and *eat*. There is:

- **the base form** (*look, eat*)
- **the present simple 3rd person singular** (*looks, eats*)
- **the past simple form** (*looked, ate*)
- **the past participle** (*looked, eaten*)
- **the present participle** (*looking, eating*)

9. When using verbs, ensure you know why you are using them.

Think about the purpose of the verb. This is called **conjugation**. In English, there are four ways the verb can be conjugated. Examples for the present simple and present continuous forms of *help* are given here:

- **Positive:** *You help; You are helping*
- **Negative:** *You do not help; You are not helping*
- **Question:** *Do you help? Are you helping?*
- **Negative question:** *Do you not help? Are you not helping?*

10. Many English verbs are formed by adding **prefixes** to the start, or **suffixes** to the end, of nouns / **adjectives**.

- + **~ise (BrE) / ~ize (AmE)**: *modernise/modernize, realize*
- + **~fy / ~ify**: *clarify, notify, simplify*
- + **~en**: *darken, deepen, frighten, shorten*

Summary

1. Verbs are content words, making up about 15 per cent of English words.
2. Every sentence must contain a verb; otherwise it is not a sentence.
3. There are only five ways of expressing a verb in English, which is much simpler than most languages.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

(i) Complete the following gaps to accurately describe the English verb system.

- ☐ There are three ways of expressing when something happens: the , and .
- ☐ There are four ways of expressing how something happens: the , , and .

(ii) Complete the following table, which shows the five ways of expressing verbs in English.

Base form	Present simple (3 rd person singular)	Past simple	Past participle	Present participle
call		called		calling
	gives		given	
		wanted		
use				
				trying
	tells			

2. Check your understanding.

There is a mistake in each of the following sentences. In each case, correct the mistake, and identify the type of mistake which was made.

Sentence (with correction)	Type or mistake
He made made a cake for my birthday. I eated ate too much though.	Confusion between regular and irregular verbs
He think about football all the time.	
You were travelling all day tomorrow, so go to bed now.	
I am being forty years old.	
She gone before he arrived.	

3. Create your own.

Conjugation talks about the purpose of a verb. Using the verb go, write four example sentences to show the following:

Positive:	
Negative:	
Question:	
Negative question:	

What different types of verb are there?



'We are not nouns, we are verbs ... I think you can be imprisoned if you think of yourself as a noun.'

Stephen Fry (1957–)

English comedian, actor, writer, presenter and activist

A Reflection

Look at the following pairs of sentences. Read each one carefully and tick which one is correct.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. She should. | She should sleep. |
| b. She sent. | She sent an email. |
| c. She owns a dog. | She is owning a dog. |
| d. My friend builded his own house. | My friend built his own house. |

B Contextualization

The following feedback relates to each of the incorrect sentences above. Write the incorrect sentence in the appropriate place.

- ☐ Some verbs in English are transitive, meaning that they require a direct object. Without a direct object, they do not make sense.

Incorrect sentence:
- ☐ There is a subject and an auxiliary verb only. While this is sometimes possible, it does not make sense here. An auxiliary verb is usually combined with a main verb.

Incorrect sentence:
- ☐ Because of their meaning, and the activity they describe, some verbs in English very rarely take the continuous aspect. These stative verbs generally appear in the simple or perfect aspect.

Incorrect sentence:
- ☐ An irregular verb has had its past simple formed according to the rule of regular verbs. It is important to learn which verbs are regular and which are irregular.

Incorrect sentence:

C Explanation

What is the difference between main and auxiliary verbs?

She should sleep. ✓ *She should.* ✗

The main verb of a sentence is the verb which tells you the main information of the sentence – i.e., the main thing which is happening. In the example, therefore, *sleep* is the **main** verb.

Auxiliary verbs, on the other hand, have no meaning when used by themselves. They only have a meaning when combined with a main verb. As such, *should* is the auxiliary here, since *she should* in isolation makes no sense in English.

The job of an auxiliary verb is to be a helper – to add meaning to, or alter the meaning of, the main verb. Therefore, *She should sleep* has a different meaning to *She sleeps*. *She sleeps* just describes a situation; *She should sleep* is a recommendation. There are six main ways in which an auxiliary verb affects the meaning of a main verb. Details of these are outlined below:

To show **aspect** (►Step 13):

- *be* is used to form the **continuous aspect**:
e.g., *We are going*; *We were talking*.
- *have* is used to form the **perfect aspect**:
e.g., *She has visited the USA*; *I realized she hadn't taken her coat*.

To form **questions** (►Step 35)

- *do*, *be* and *have* can all be used in question forms:
e.g., *Did she go?* *Are we alone?* *Has she arrived?*

To show **voice** (►Step 15):

- *be* is used to make **passive** forms: e.g., *He was given the news*.

To form **negatives** (►Step 34)

- *do* can combined with *not*: e.g., *He doesn't talk*; *They didn't tell me*.

For **emphasis** (►Step 39)

- *do* can increase the power of a verb: e.g., *I did tell her*.

To show **modality** (►Step 31)

- A range of so-called modal verbs (*would* / *should* / *can* / *could* / *may* / *might* / *must* / *will* / *shall* / *ought*) can alter the meaning of the main verb in areas such as degree of certainty or obligation: e.g., *I can swim*; *She must go*; *They may come*.

Grammar box: Three key facts about auxiliaries

- They always precede the main verb.
- More than one can precede a main verb (e.g., *She was being told* / *I could have been a contender*)
- They can be used by themselves (i.e., without a main verb) if the meaning is clear: e.g., *Are you going?* / *I might (go)*.

What is the difference between transitive and intransitive verbs?

She sent an email. ✓ *She sent.* ✗

Some verbs in English must be followed by an **object**; that is, they are **transitive**. Without a **direct object**, they do not make sense. As the example sentence shows, *send* is a common transitive verb. It does not make sense to just say *She sent* – what did she send? Such verbs must be followed by a **noun** or **noun phrase**, acting as an object. Other common transitive verbs include *bring, buy, get, give, leave, make, pay, play, take* and *write*. On the other hand, there are some verbs which are intransitive, meaning that they cannot be followed by a direct object. Common intransitive verbs include *cough, die, dream, go, sit, sneeze, sleep, fall, run, rise* and *cry*. However, it should be noted that intransitive verbs can be followed by an **indirect object**. Therefore, it is possible to say *I sat on a chair* or *I slept in a bed*.

Grammar box: Ambitransitive verbs

Some verbs can be both transitive and intransitive, such as *read*. In the following example, the first use of *read* is intransitive, and the second is transitive:
When I saw her, she was reading.
She was reading a book about science.

What is the difference between stative and dynamic (non-stative) verbs?

She owns a dog. ✓ *She is owning a dog.* ✗

Some verbs hardly ever appear in the continuous aspect. These are known as **stative** verbs. This is because of what they mean. It is not possible to think about some verbs in English as being ‘unfinished’ or ‘temporary’. Example (c) in Part A shows this clearly. In English, the verb *own* means something permanent (i.e., a state) – you either own a dog, or you do not own a dog. The statement does not make sense if you talk about it in a temporary way. There are several other verbs which fall into this category, including:

- ‘Thinking’ and ‘opinion’ verbs (e.g., *agree, believe, doubt, guess, imagine, know, mean, remember, think*)
- ‘Feeling’ and ‘emotion’ verbs (e.g., *dislike, hate, like, love, prefer, want, wish*).
- ‘Sense’ verbs (e.g., *feel, hear, see, smell, taste*)
- ‘Relation’ verbs (e.g., *contain, consist of*)

Note that whilst some of the verbs above can be used in the continuous form, their meaning changes when this happens. Compare the two uses of *think* in the following sentences:

- *What do you think of London?* (= in general, what is your opinion?)
- *I’m thinking of going to London on holiday.* (= I’m in the process of considering it as an option)

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Write brief definitions of the following:

Term	Definition
Auxiliary verb	
Transitive verb	
Stative verb	
Irregular verb	

2. Check your understanding.

- (i) Look up the following verbs in a dictionary, and tick the appropriate columns to show you understand their grammar.

Verb	Regular	Irregular	Transitive	Intransitive
eat				
Go				
Look				
run				
Die				

- (ii) Complete the following gaps with an appropriate form of the verb given in brackets. Note that you may also need to put negatives and adverbs in the correct position.

My friend Alan (*learn*) English for five years. Although he (*like*) learning English, he (*prefer*) watching TV. He (*definitely, not, work*) hard enough. As a result, I think he (*may, fail*) his exams next year.

3. Create your own.

Write sentences which do the following:

Sentence	Example
a. Use <i>do</i> as an auxiliary verb	<i>I do believe you!</i>
b. Use a modal auxiliary	
c. Use more than one auxiliary verb	
d. Use <i>dislike</i> as a stative verb	
e. Use an intransitive verb followed by an indirect object	

What is meant by 'tense' and 'aspect'?



I see the past, present and future existing all at once before me.'

William Blake (1757–1827)
English Romantic poet and painter

A Reflection

The following sentences all refer to the English verb system. All of these points have been discussed in either ►Step 11 or ►Step 12.

Complete the sentences with the correct number.

- ☐ There are tenses (when the verb happens).
- ☐ There are aspects (how the verb happens).
- ☐ There are ways of expressing a verb.

B Contextualization

Each of the following pairs of sentences has something in common: they are either in the same tense, or have the same aspect. In column 2, write either 'tense' or 'aspect', and in column 3, write what tense or aspect it is using words from the box. Looking back at ►Step 11 or ►Step 12 may help you.

simple past present perfect continuous future continuous simple

Group of sentences	Same tense or aspect?	What tense or aspect?
a. They were playing all yesterday afternoon. a. Right now, it is raining very heavily	aspect	continuous
b. They played the game last night. It finished 0–0. b. It rains all the time in London!		
c. At 3pm this afternoon, I'll be washing my car. c. I will wash your car tomorrow.		
d. They played against Manchester United after they had played Chelsea. d. They had been playing football for two hours before the rain came.		
e. It has rained every day for the past week. e. By 7pm, I will have washed all the cars.		
f. It has been raining since 7 o'clock. f. At 7pm, I will have been washing cars for eight hours.		

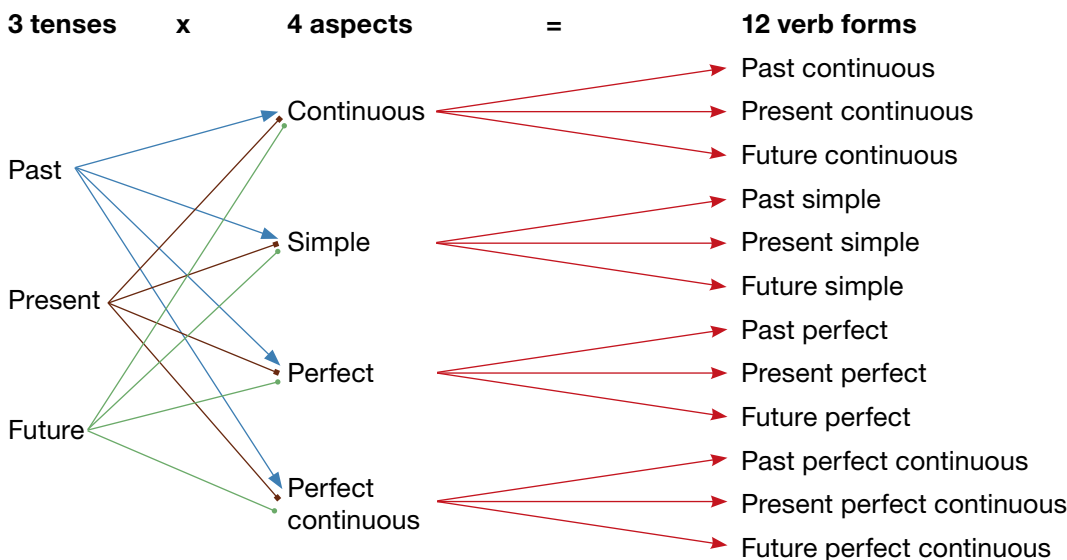
C Explanation

Why are you telling me about tense and aspect?

When you hear verbs being described as 'past simple' or 'present perfect', what do you think? Do you really know what these words mean? Or, like many others, do you think the words don't really mean anything? In fact, the way we describe a verb is very important, and directly relates to how the verb is being used. A good understanding about how verbs work will decrease the number of errors you make.

The English verb system is often thought to be difficult, illogical and hard to understand. This is unfortunate, and also inaccurate. The English verb system is actually quite logical, and much simpler than the verb systems of many languages.

There are only 12 ways to express verb forms in English: each of three **tenses** (past, present and future) can be expressed in each of the four **aspects** (continuous, simple, perfect and perfect continuous). The diagram below shows this:



What are the tenses and aspects of English?

The first part of the question is the easiest to answer: the three tenses are the past, the present and the future. It is important to note early on that although tense refers to time, the 'tense forms' are not always exactly the same as the 'verb forms'. This is particularly true for present forms. For example, the present simple can be used to describe things which are true over an extended period of time (i.e., past, present and future). Past and future tenses, however, almost always refer to things which have either already finished, or which have yet to begin.

Answers to Part B table

(b) aspect – simple (c) tense –
future (d) tense – past (e) aspect –
perfect (f) aspect – perfect continuous

The aspect of a verb refers to whether an action is ongoing (unfinished) or completed. Therefore, the aspect indicates very important information about the verb. Regardless of whether the four aspects are combined with the past, present or future, they all have the same function. For example, the continuous aspect means 'unfinished' in any of the three tenses.

The information on the next page provides example sentences, explanations and timelines to show this information more clearly.

The **continuous aspect** is used to describe **unfinished activity**.

<i>They were playing all yesterday afternoon.</i>	<i>Right now, it is raining very heavily.</i>	<i>At 3pm this afternoon, I'll be washing my car.</i>
<i>At the time the speaker is talking about (i.e., yesterday afternoon), the action was unfinished (even though in reality it has finished).</i>	<i>At the time the speaker is talking about (i.e., now), the action is unfinished.</i>	<i>At the time the speaker is talking about (i.e., 3pm this afternoon) the action is unfinished (even though in reality it has not yet started).</i>

TIMELINE TO BE ADDED

The **simple aspect** is used to describe **states and events** which are considered to be completed (in contrast to the incomplete nature of the continuous aspect).

<i>They played the game last night. It finished 0–0.</i>	<i>It rains all the time in London!</i>	<i>I will wash your car tomorrow.</i>
<i>The game is complete – and occurred at a specific point in time.</i>	<i>The speaker is talking about a series of complete actions which surround the present.</i>	<i>The speaker is predicting a future event.</i>

TIMELINE TO BE ADDED

The **perfect aspect** is used to describe **what happens before a point in time**. It talks about not only when an action began, but when it was completed.

<i>They had played against Manchester United after they had played Chelsea.</i>	<i>It has rained every day for the past week.</i>	<i>By 7pm, I will have washed all the cars.</i>
<i>The speaker is talking about a past event (1) which finished before another past event (2).</i>	<i>The speaker is referring to an event which began before the present, but which has a connection to the present.</i>	<i>The speaker is saying that something will have finished before a point in the future (even though it has not yet started).</i>

TIMELINE TO BE ADDED

The **perfect continuous aspect** is a combination of the perfect and continuous aspects. It is therefore used to describe **unfinished activity before a point in time**.

<i>They had been playing football for two hours before the rain came.</i>	<i>It has been raining since 7 o'clock.</i>	<i>At 7pm, I will have been washing cars for eight hours.</i>
<i>The speaker is talking about an activity which was unfinished at a specific point in the past, which occurred before another past event.</i>	<i>The speaker is saying that an activity began in the past, and is unfinished at the moment of speaking (and the activity will probably continue).</i>	<i>The speaker is saying that before a specific point in the future, an event will have started, but it will not be complete.</i>

TIMELINE TO BE ADDED

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following statements in as much detail as possible.

The continuous aspect is used to describe ...	
The simple aspect is used to describe ...	
The perfect aspect is used to describe ...	
The perfect continuous aspect is used to describe ...	

2. Check your understanding.

What verb form would you need if you wanted to describe:

Example: what you are doing at the moment? = *present continuous*

a. an event which occurred at a specific point in the past?

b. an event that finished before another event in the past?

c. an event which will be unfinished at a point in the future?

d. an event which started in the past, but which is still unfinished in the present?

e. an event which will have finished before a point in the future?

3. Create your own.

Write a sentence using each of the following verb forms.

<i>Present continuous</i>	<i>At the moment, I am learning about how to use verb forms in English.</i>
a. Past simple	
b. Present perfect	
c. Future continuous	
d. Present simple	
e. Future perfect	

How do I know which verb form to use?

'Respect the verbs in your life.'

Jerriann Wayahowl Law (1963 –)
American author and poet

A

Reflection

Look at the highlighted verbs in the sentences below. In each case, tick the correct box according to which tense and aspect the verb is in.

When you have done this, think about how specifically the verb form is being used.

Sentence	Tense			Aspect			
	Past	Present	Future	Simple	Continuous	Perfect	Perfect Continuous
New York is in the USA.		✓		✓			
My parents went home yesterday.							
By next year, I will have got a new job.							
Most Americans speak English.							
They're talking to him.							
When you arrive, I'll be cooking dinner.							
Had she studied English before she moved to London?							
They'll arrive sometime this evening.							
I've been learning English for six years.							
Were you working at 9:00 this morning?							
I have been to France many times.							
By 6pm tonight, I'll have been working for three hours!							
She'd been studying English for a long time, before she finally understood grammar.							

B Contextualization

Look at the time words in the word box used in Part A. Match them to the definitions below.

yesterday next year when after for six years for a long time

A specific point in the past

A specific point in the future

Specific duration

General duration

Indicates two things are happening at the same time

Indicates one event happens later than another event

C Explanation

What are the most commonly used verb forms in English?

It is not easy to say which **verb** forms are most commonly used in English. The frequency with which a verb form is used will depend on why / where you are using English, and who you are speaking to. For example, in spoken English, we are more likely to use the **present continuous**; in academic writing, the **present simple**; in writing novels, the **past perfect**. However, it is possible to identify some general trends. The diagram below puts the 12 verb forms into four categories as to how commonly they are used. Clearly then, you should focus your attention on the most frequent forms.

Past simple Present simple Present perfect
Future simple Past continuous Present continuous
Future continuous Past perfect Present perfect continuous
Future perfect Future perfect continuous Past perfect continuous

Most Common Verb Forms



Least Common Verb Forms

How, specifically, are the 12 verb forms of English used?

The table on the following page provides a more detailed overview of the specific functions of English verb forms. It tries to provide additional information to the core principles outlined in ►Step 13. Note that the table only includes the **active voice**: the **passive voice** is discussed in ►Step 15.

The table also includes a list of relevant **time words** – words are commonly used with specific verb forms. For example, *at the moment*, *now* and *currently* are used with the present continuous, since they all refer to things happening in the present which are incomplete. Time words can be put in the following categories:

- **Adverbs / adverbial phrases** (►Step 17):
e.g., *historically, regularly, currently*
- **Prepositional phrases** (►Step 22): e.g., *in the past; by next week; at the moment*
- **Conjunctions** (►Step 21): e.g., *when, while*
- **Nouns / noun phrases** (►Unit B): e.g., *yesterday, today, three weeks ago*

Grammar box: Three top tips for using verbs

1. Be consistent in your use of verb forms.
Do not jump between forms unnecessarily.
2. When deciding which verb forms you need, think about all the **events** / **actions** in the sentence, and how they relate to each other (= think about their time relationship).
3. Consider how verb forms work with each other – e.g., how the past simple is often used with the past perfect / past continuous.

Summary

1. Focus particularly on the most commonly used verb forms in English – the past simple, present simple and present perfect.
2. Ensure you know the specific grammatical construction of each verb form (e.g., present continuous = *am/is/are* + present participle).
3. Know which time words commonly go with which verb forms.

Example sentences	Functions	Related time words
Past simple: base form + ~ed / irregular		
<i>My parents went home yesterday.</i>	To show a single action started and finished at a specific point in the past	<i>Yesterday; two days ago; four weeks ago; in 1977; historically; in the past</i>
<i>Sue lived in London for three years.</i>	To show something happened in the past for a period of time	
<i>She was happy as a child.</i>	To show past habits, truths or facts (= <i>used to</i>)	
Present simple: base form + ~s/~es in the 3 rd person		
<i>New York is in the USA.</i>	To state general truths or facts	<i>generally; regularly; usually; always; never; every day/ week/month/year</i>
<i>Most Americans speak English.</i>	To make generalizations	
<i>She goes to school everyday</i>	To describe repeated actions	
<i>I leave tomorrow at 8 o'clock</i>	To indicate a future action or event which is planned or timetabled	<i>next week; tonight; this afternoon</i>

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Which verb forms are required to express the following? Also make a note of any time words which may be commonly used.

Function	Verb Form	Time words
a. To show past habits, truths or facts	<i>past simple</i>	<i>yesterday, in 1977, last week</i>
b. To describe repeated actions		
c. To show that past actions are still unfinished		
d. To discuss things that are true in periods around now		
e. To express or request a voluntary action		
f. To show parallel actions in the past		

2. Check your understanding.

What is the difference between the following pairs of sentences?

- a. Sue lived in London for three years. / Sue has lived in London for three years.

- b. They'll arrive sometime this evening. / By 10pm tonight, they'll have arrived.

- c. Most Americans speak English. / That American is speaking English.

- d. She studied English when she moved to London. / She had studied English before she moved to London.

3. Create your own.

Complete the sentences with the appropriate form of the verb in brackets. Sometimes more than one answer may be possible.

- At the moment, I _____ (*travel*) to London by train.
- She _____ (*already, leave*) the party when I _____ (*arrive*).
- The essay _____ (*finish*) by tomorrow.
- I _____ (*sit*) on the sofa when my dog _____ (*jump*) on me.
- She _____ (*play*) basketball before. I _____ (*see*) her win a game last week.
- Her plane _____ (*leave*) at 10am tomorrow. Hopefully she _____ (*get back*) home by midnight.

What are the active and passive voices and how are they used in English?



'The whole of nature ... is a conjugation of the verb to eat, in the active and passive.'

W. R. Inge (1860–1954)

English author, Anglican priest and Dean of St Paul's Cathedral

A Reflection

Which of the following represents the normal order of words in English? Is this the same as your language?

- Subject-Verb-Object (SVO)
- Object-Verb-Subject (OVS)
- Subject-Object-Verb (SOV)

What is the difference in emphasis between the following pairs of sentences?

- I made a mistake. / Mistakes were made.
- She'll be playing football tomorrow. / Football will be being played tomorrow.
- I was given a birthday present. / I was given a birthday present by my parents.

B Contextualization

Compare the following pairs of sentences. The sentence in the first column is in the active, whereas the sentence in the second column is in the passive. In each case, the passive is more appropriate. Explain the specific reason for this.

Active	Passive	Specific reason used
The Swiss speak German, French and Italian.	German, French and Italian is spoken in Switzerland.	Emphasis is put on the object rather than the subject.
Somebody has stolen my car.	My car has been stolen.	
She discovered that her company was paying her less than men in the same position.	She discovered she was being paid less by her company than men in the same position.	
The people on the bus who are late for work are shouting at the driver.	The driver is being shouted at by the people on the bus who are late for work.	

C Explanation

What is the passive voice and when is it used in English?

The 'normal' **word order** of English (i.e., which the majority of **sentences** follow) is SVO (►Unit A). This is similar to many major world languages, such as Chinese, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Thai. However, many other languages (e.g., Japanese or Turkish) have a SOV structure. Knowing what order your language follows can help you form the passive more accurately in English.

In English, the **passive voice** is used when this SVO word order is reversed to become OV(S). The **subject** is in brackets here because it is not always necessary to include it in a sentence.

There are **four** main reasons why the passive might be used, which are outlined below. It is important to emphasize that the active sentences in Part B are not wrong, but rather that the sentences in the passive are more appropriate because they make more sense in that specific context.

Note:

Since the majority of English sentences use the verb in the active, if you use the passive too often, your language may sound a bit strange and, possibly, a little bit boring.

1. When the object is to be emphasized.

German, French and Italian is spoken in Switzerland.

There may be occasions where you want or need to emphasize the **object** of the sentence rather than the **agent**. In this example, the writer wants to stress the languages rather than the country, and so reverses the order of the sentence.

2. When the agent is not known or unimportant.

My car has been stolen.

In this situation, you might not know, or would not care who 'did' the act (i.e., stole the car). What is important is the fact that it is no longer there, meaning that you need to emphasize the agent. Wherever possible, in English, it is best to avoid vague and meaningless subjects like *somebody*, *people*, *person*, *everybody*, *anybody* and so on. The passive can also be used to avoid identifying responsibility, as in the example *Mistakes were made*.

3. When the agent is obvious.

She discovered she was being paid less than men in the same position.

In certain circumstances, it is clear from the context who the subject is. When this is the case, it is best not to use the subject. This means we can avoid repetition and using vague, unnecessary language.

4. When the subject is very long.

The driver is being shouted at by the people on the bus who are late for work.

In this sentence, the subject and the object are both important (unlike the previous three examples). Although it might make more 'sense' to use the normal SVO order, to do so would make the sentence difficult to understand. If the long subject (*people on the bus who are late for work*) came first, you would have to remember a lot of information before getting to the verb. Putting the object at the beginning (*the driver*) makes it easier.

What types of verbs can be put into the passive voice?

As discussed previously, verbs can be divided into those which are **transitive** and those which are **intransitive** (►Step 12). Transitive verbs (e.g., *give* / *play* / *write*) are those which have direct objects. Since using the passive requires you to put the direct object before the verb, only transitive verbs can be used in the passive. Intransitive verbs (e.g., *arrive* / *sleep* / *wait*) do not have an object, and therefore cannot be put into the passive. Other verbs which cannot be put into the passive include *have*, *become*, *contain*, *look like* and *agree with*.

Reminder

- To make a past participle with **regular verbs** you add **~ed** to the infinitive (e.g., **looked**; **walked**; **worked**).
- The past participle of **irregular verbs** must be learnt separately. Past participles commonly used in the passive include: **bought** (*buy*); **broken** (*break*); **built** (*build*); **caught** (*catch*); **chosen** (*choose*); **drunk** (*drink*); **eaten** (*eat*); **given** (*give*); **gone** (*go*); **known** (*know*); **left** (*leave*); **made** (*make*); **read** (*read*); **said** (*say*); **seen** (*see*); **sent** (*send*); **taught** (*teach*); **thought** (*think*); **told** (*tell*); **won** (*win*)

How do I form the passive?

The passive is formed by using *to be* as an **auxiliary verb** (►Step 12), followed by the past participle form (pp) of the **main verb**. A table of the most commonly used passive forms is below:

Verb form	Construction	Example
Present simple	<i>am/is/are</i> + pp	English is spoken here.
Present continuous	<i>am/are/is being</i> + pp	Lunch is being eaten.
Present perfect	<i>has/have been</i> + pp	He's been fired.
Past simple	<i>was/were</i> + pp	Mistakes were made .
Past continuous	<i>was/were being</i> + pp	The meal was being served when I arrived.
Past perfect	<i>had been</i> + pp	The meat had been cooked for too long.
Future simple	<i>will be</i> + pp	The work will be finished by 5 o'clock.
Future perfect	<i>will have been</i> + pp	The phones will have already been sold .
Infinitive	<i>(to) be</i> + pp	We have been invited to the party.

Although other verb forms can be put into the passive, this is not common in English since they do not sound right (e.g., future continuous – *football will be being played tomorrow*). Also note that **phrasal verbs** can be used in the passive, so long as they are transitive (e.g., *He was looked after by his daughter for many years*).

When do I need *by* + subject?

When using the passive, there are two options about what to do with the subject. You can either leave it out entirely (e.g., *I was given a birthday present*) or you can use the *by* + subject structure after the verb (i.e., *I was given a birthday present by my parents*.)

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

What are the main reasons for using the passive in English?

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

2. Check your understanding.

Read the following pairs of sentences and in each case decide whether the active or passive form would be more appropriate. In each pair of sentences, the active form is given first.

- A builder built the house in 1890. / The house was built in 1890.
- We'll help you later on. / You will be helped later on.
- A repairman is repairing the road. / The road is being repaired.
- Finally the government passed the laws. / Finally, the laws were passed.
- Cheesemakers make cheese throughout the UK. / Cheese is made throughout the UK.

3. Create your own.

Read the notes below about the artist Pablo Picasso. When you have done this, write five sentences about his life, using the passive voice where appropriate.

- ☐ Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
- ☐ Inventor of 'Cubism'
- ☐ 2 marriages – Olga Khokhlova and Jacqueline Roque
- ☐ Spent lots of time in his early life in Paris
- ☐ Many galleries around the world have his paintings

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

What are adjectives and how can I use them?



'The adjective is the banana skin of the parts of speech.'

Clifton Fadiman (1904–1999)

American intellectual, author, editor, radio and television personality

A Reflection

Consider the following definition of the word adjective: 'A word which describes a noun or a pronoun' (www.dictionary.cambridge.org).

Read through the passage below, and underline those words which you think are adjectives. An example has been done for you.

Adjectives are an important group of words in English. If you use these interesting words carefully, they can make your meaning stronger. Adjectives can help you be clear about what you want to say. However, if you use too many adjectives, it may be difficult to understand your point.

Adjectives can often be recognized by their suffix. Some common adjectival suffixes are listed below. Try to think of at least once adjective which has this suffix.

~able <i>reasonable</i>	~esque	~ish
~al	~ful	~ive
~ant	~ible	~less
~ary	~ic	~ly
~ed	~ile	~ous
~ent	~ing	~y

B Contextualization

Look at the six sentences below. In each case, there is a problem. Identify what this problem is and correct it.

Sentence	Problem
1. The Taj Mahal is a building beautiful . <i>beautiful building.</i>	<i>In English, adjectives generally come before the noun.</i>
2. The Parthenon is an old, interesting building.	
3. The Empire State Building is very interested .	

C Explanation

What are adjectives and how should they be used?

Adjectives are an important **word class** in English. Their job is to add meaning to **nouns** and **pronouns**. They are usually found immediately before the noun (or pronoun) which they modify. When using adjectives, ensure that they really do add meaning and value to what you have said or written. Do not just add them because you think 'they sound nice'. The passage from page **XX** is shown below with the adjectives underlined.

Adjectives are an important group of words in English. If you use these interesting words carefully, they can make your meaning stronger. Adjectives can help you be clear about what you want to say. However, if you use too many adjectives, it may be difficult to understand your point.

What are the most common adjectives in English?

The table below outlines some of the most commonly used adjectives in English.

100 common adjectives in English

afraid	dead	free	many	short
alive	different	full	mean	slow
angry	done	good	near	small
annoyed	dry	great	new	soft
annoying	dull	happy	next	special
apart	early	hard	nice	strange
bad	easy	heavy	noisy	strong
beautiful	empty	high	old	sure
big	excited	hot	open	surprised
boring	exciting	huge	ordinary	tall
broken	expensive	interesting	poor	tiny
busy	fake	large	pretty	tired
cheap	false	last	quick	together
clear	far	late	ready	true
close	fast	lazy	real	ugly
closed	few	light	rich	warm
cold	fine	little	right	weak
cool	finished	long	sad	wet
dangerous	first	low	safe	wrong
dark	flat	lucky	same	young

What are the main rules for using adjectives in English?

Refer to the answers you gave in Part B to check your understanding of how to use adjectives. The following general rules apply. The separate steps in this unit which talk about these issues in more detail are identified in brackets afterwards.

Rule 1: Adjectives generally come before the noun / pronoun they describe. (►Step 19).

The Taj Mahal is a building ~~beautiful~~ beautiful building.



Rule 2: When more than one adjective is used before one noun/pronoun, the adjectives come in a specific order. (►Step 19)

The Parthenon is an ~~old, interesting~~ interesting, old building.



Rule 3: Adjectives do not 'agree' with nouns.

Egypt has many ~~ancients~~ ancient buildings.



In some languages, the form of the adjective changes according to the noun with which it appears. For example, if the noun is **plural**, then an **s** might be added onto the end of the adjective. This does not happen in English. Nouns in English do not have a '**gender**' either, as they do in some languages, and so there are no 'masculine' or 'feminine' adjectives.

What common problems are there when using adjectives?

Again, refer to the answers you gave in Part B.

Problem 1: Using the wrong form of an adjective. (►Step 20)

The Empire State Building is very ~~interested~~ interesting.

Some adjectives can have more than one form. In particular, adjectives can be formed using the **present** (~ing) and **past** (~ed) **participle** forms. These two forms have distinct meanings, and are commonly confused.



Problem 2: Using the wrong form of a comparative or superlative adjective. (►Step 18)

The Great Wall of China is ~~more long~~ longer than Hadrian's Wall.

There is a specific set of rules which governs how you make the **comparative** and **superlative** forms of adjectives. Generally speaking, for one- or two-syllable adjectives, ~er is added for the former and ~est for the latter, whereas for adjectives with three or more syllables, the *more/most* + adjective structure is used.



Problem 3: Not recognizing that some adjectives are 'ungradeable'. (►Step 20)

The Great Pyramid of Giza is ~~very~~ enormous.

Certain adjectives cannot be 'graded', essentially meaning that they cannot be preceded by words like *very* or *quite*. Here, the '**gradeable**' equivalent to *enormous* would be *large* (i.e., you can say *very large*, but not *very enormous*).



D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following sentences with appropriate words. If you are unsure, read through the previous three pages again.

- Adjectives are used to describe _____ (*nouns / pronouns / nouns and pronouns*).
- The form of an adjective _____ changes depending on whether the noun is singular/plural or masculine/feminine. (*sometimes / never / always*)
- The form of the adjective which ends ~er is known as the _____ (*comparative / superlative*).
- Adjectives like _____ can be called 'gradeable' because you can put words like *very* and *quite* before them. (*large / enormous*)

2. Check your understanding.

- What are the adjective forms of these nouns and verbs? Use a dictionary if you need to.

Note: In some cases, more than one adjective may exist.

Nouns	Verbs
artist – <i>artistic</i>	comfort –
centre –	create –
day –	expect –
skill –	permit –
sun –	urge –

- Look up the following suffixes in a dictionary or online, and state what they indicate. An example has been done for you.

~able <i>can be done</i>	~ful
~al	~ish
~esque	~less

3. Create your own.

Choose five adjectives from the list you created in 2i above, and write a sentence showing the meaning of each.

Example: *My friend is very artistic. He is always drawing or going to exhibitions.*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are adverbs and how can I use them?



'The road to hell is paved with adverbs.'

Stephen King (1947–)

American author of contemporary horror, suspense, science fiction and fantasy

A Reflection

Consider the following definition of the word adverb: 'A word that describes or gives more information about a verb, adjective, adverb or phrase' (www.dictionary.cambridge.org).

Read through the passage below, and underline those words which you think are adverbs. An example has been done for you.

Learners of English often find adverbs difficult, finding it hard to use them correctly. There are many reasons for this. One main reason is that many languages use adverbs differently to English. Additionally, learners are frequently confused about where to put an adverb in a sentence. Finally, it is important to note that adverbs should only be used when they genuinely add meaning to a text.

Many adverbs in English end with the suffix *~ly*. Write down as many as you can think of in the box below.

B Contextualization

Read through the following sentences. In each case, the adverb is in bold.

Decide how the adverb modifies the meaning of the sentence. Consider how the sentence would have a different meaning if the adverb was not there. An example has been done for you.

- a. She ran **slowly** so that her son could overtake her and win.

Without the adverb, the sentence makes no sense.

- b. I will **probably** be late.

- c. It was **extremely** hot when we went on holiday.

- d. She was **absolutely** certain about her answer.

- e. He is the best candidate for the job because he is **highly** educated.

c Explanation

What is an adverb?

Adverbs are an extremely difficult part of speech to define. Although the definition given on the previous page is correct, it does not quite capture the complexity of how adverbs are used. Whilst it is clear how to use **adjectives**, adverbs are a more difficult category of words to understand. However, as the passage below shows, they are an important and frequently used part of speech. Therefore, it is important to know how to use them.

Learners of English often find adverbs difficult, finding it hard to use them correctly. There are many reasons for this. One main reason is that many languages use adverbs differently to English. Additionally, learners are frequently confused about where to put an adverb in a sentence. Finally, it is important to note that adverbs should only be used when they genuinely add meaning to a text.

What difference does an adverb make to a sentence?

Adverbs can alter the meaning of a sentence quite radically, as the table below shows.

Sentence	What difference does the adverb make?
a. She ran slowly so that her son could overtake her and win.	<i>Without the adverb, the sentence makes no sense.</i>
b. I will probably be late.	<i>The adverb weakens the meaning of the sentence.</i>
c. It was extremely hot when we went on holiday.	<i>The adverb changes the sentence's tone – from positive (it was hot) to negative (it was too hot).</i>
d. She was absolutely certain about her answer.	<i>The adverb intensifies the meaning of the word.</i>
e. He is the best candidate for the job because he is highly educated.	<i>The adverb provides extra, relevant information so that the sentence makes more sense.</i>

In what situations are adverbs generally used?

Adverbs can be divided into several categories according to the situation in which they are generally used. The main categories are:

- **Place: where** something happens (e.g., *there, here, downstairs*)
- **Time: when** something happens (e.g., *recently, afterwards, tomorrow*)
- **Manner: how** something happens (e.g., *well, quickly, accurately*)
- **Degree: to what extent** something happens (e.g., *very, really, so*)
- **Frequency: how often** something happens (e.g., *sometimes, generally, always*)

Depending on what type of adverb they are, and what their specific function in the sentence is, their position will be changed. This is investigated in more detail in Step 18.

How are adverbs formed?

The majority of adverbs in English are formed by adding the suffix *-ly* onto the end of the adjective form. The table below presents 100 of the most commonly used adverbs which follow this pattern.

100 common adverbs in English which have the suffix *-ly*

absolutely	Constantly	genuinely	occasionally	slowly
actively	correctly	gradually	originally	smoothly
actually	Currently	happily	particularly	specifically
additionally	Deeply	hardly	perfectly	strictly
adequately	Definitely	hopefully	periodically	strongly
aggressively	Directly	immediately	possibly	stupidly
anxiously	disappointingly	independently	practically	subsequently
apparently	Easily	individually	previously	successfully
appropriately	Effectively	instantly	privately	successively
approximately	Equally	jointly	probably	surely
badly	essentially	largely	publically	surprisingly
barely	ethically	lazily	quickly	suspiciously
basically	eventually	locally	really	totally
briefly	exactly	mainly	recently	undoubtedly
carefully	extremely	morally	regularly	urgently
clearly	falsely	naturally	respectively	usually
closely	finally	necessarily	significantly	virtually
completely	firstly (secondly)	newly	similarly	visibly
confidently	fundamentally	normally	simply	widely
consequently	generally	objectively	slightly	wrongly

However, it is a mistake to think that all adverbs have to end with *-ly*, or indeed that all words which end with *-ly* are adverbs. Common adverbs which do not end with *-ly* include *about*, *around*, *as*, *fast*, *hard*, *just*, *not*, *often*, *seldom*, *so*, *too*, *very* and *well*. Common words which end in *-ly* but are adjectives rather than adverbs include *daily*, *early*, *friendly*, *likely*, *lovely*, *monthly*, *only*, *silly*, *timely* and *ugly*.

How and when should I use adverbs?

When used well, adverbs can add important and sophisticated meaning to an academic text. However, when used poorly, they can reduce the quality and impact of your writing. A general rule to follow is: use adverbs when they genuinely add value to your writing. When they do not, remove them.

Top Tip: Be careful not to use an adjective when you need an adverb.

This is a common mistake made by learners. For example:

✗ *She hit the tennis shot perfect.*

✓ *She hit the tennis shot perfectly (adverb) or She hit a perfect (adjective) tennis shot.*

Summary

1. Adverbs modify the meaning of verbs (mostly), but also adjectives and other adverbs.
2. The five main categories of adverbs are: place, time, manner, degree and frequency.
3. Very often, adverbs are formed by adding the suffix *-ly* onto adjectives.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following sentences about adverbs. Use an appropriate word or phrase from the brackets.

- Adverbs can modify _____ (verbs / adjectives / other adverbs / all of the above).
- Adverbs should be used _____ (as much as possible / where they can add value / as little as possible).
- Adverbs _____ end with the suffix *-ly* (always / generally / sometimes).
- The position of adverbs in a sentence is _____ (unimportant / important).

2. Check your understanding.

(i) Rewrite the following sentences using the adverb in brackets.

- Her train left at 12:00. She arrived at 11:59. (*just*)

She arrived just in time for her train.

- I agree with you a lot about this issue. (*strongly*)

- The cost was in the region of \$100. (*about*)

- You have to apply by yourself. (*independently*)

- Simone applied for the bank account. Imran did as well. (*jointly*)

(ii) Fill in the gaps below with an appropriate adverb from the table of 100 common adverbs on page XX.

Note: In some cases, more than one option may be possible.

- She *occasionally* plays football – perhaps two or three times a month.
- Although he is quite fat, he is *fast*.
- Our teacher *said* we should read Chapter 7. Don't you remember?
- They are so *in love*!

3. Create your own.

Choose three adverbs from the table on page XX, and write a sentence showing the meaning of each.

Example: *There were disappointingly few people in class today. Only seven turned up.*

- _____
- _____
- _____

What are comparatives and superlatives and how can they be used?



*'I am the last and highest court of appeal in detection.'
(Sherlock Holmes, from The Sign of Four)*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)

British physician and writer, creator of Sherlock Holmes

A Reflection

Consider the following definition of the words **comparative** and **superlative**:

Comparative: The form of an adjective or adverb that shows a difference in amount, quantity, degree or quality (e.g., *larger*; *less interesting*).

Superlative: The form of an adjective (or adverb) which demonstrates that no object has a higher degree / quantity (e.g., *the largest*; *the most interesting*).

(Adapted from various sources)

Read through the passage below. Underline those adjectives or adverbs which you think are comparative or superlative forms. An example has been done for you.

Probably the most difficult aspect of using superlatives correctly is understanding the grammatical rules involved. At first, they are not easy to remember, but with practice, the process becomes much simpler. You will be able to more effectively understand these forms with careful study. One final point to make is that the most common mistake in using superlatives is to forget to use the definite article. Your English will be better if you can use these forms correctly!

B Contextualization

Read through the following sentences. When you have done this, complete the table which follows in order to make the rules for forming comparative and superlative adjectives.

- ☐ Ben is definitely **taller** than Imran. He is **the tallest** student in the class.
- ☐ This is **the hottest** day of the year. It was **hotter** in London than in New Delhi.
- ☐ Saul is the **most ambitious** person in my office. He has become **more ambitious** the longer he has been here.
- ☐ Although a blue whale is **larger** than an elephant, an elephant is **the largest** land animal.
- ☐ Eating chocolate makes me the happiest person in the world! Absolutely nothing makes me happier.

C Explanation

What are the grammatical rules for making comparative and superlative adjectives?

The ability to compare and contrast is extremely important in all languages. In English, the **comparative** form is used to compare two people or things, whereas the **superlative** compares one person or thing with every other member of a group. For example:

Comparative: Ben is definitely **taller than** Imran. (*only Ben and Imran are being compared*)

Superlative: Ben is **the tallest** student in the class. (*Ben is being compared against the whole of his class*)

As the passage in Part A demonstrates, comparatives and superlatives are a common feature of both spoken and written English.

Probably **the most difficult** aspect of using superlatives correctly is understanding the grammatical rules involved. At first, they are not easy to remember, but with practice, the process becomes **much simpler**. You will be able to **more effectively understand** these forms with careful study. One final point to make is that **the most common** mistake in using superlatives is to forget to use the definite article. Your English will be **better** if you can use these forms correctly!

The table below presents a comprehensive outline of the rules involved for forming comparative and superlative adjectives. Remember that comparatives are followed by *than* and superlatives are preceded by *the*.

Example	Syllables	Ending	How to form a comparative	How to form a superlative
tall/cheap	one	n/a	Add ~er	Add ~est
large/able	one or two	e	Drop e and add ~er	Drop e and add ~est
fat/hot	one	one vowel + one consonant	Double the consonant and add ~er	Double the consonant and add ~est
sunny/happy	two	y	Change y to i and add ~er	Change y to i and add ~est
ambitious/optimistic	two, not ending ~y/three or more	n/a	more / less + adjective	most / least + adjective

A note on two-syllable words:

There are some common two-syllable adjectives where you can use either structure (~er/more and ~est/most). An example of this is *clever*. The examples given below would both be acceptable in English:

- ✓ *Who is cleverer? Dan or Jayne? I think Jayne is the cleverest.*
- ✓ *Who is more clever? Dan or Jayne? I think Jayne is the most clever.*

Other adjectives which can use either system include *common*, *likely*, *pleasant*, *polite*, *quiet*, *stupid*, *sure*, *subtle* and *simple*. There is not universal agreement about which should be used. It is often what the speaker thinks sounds best.

Grammar box: Irregular adjective forms

There are six common adjectives which take irregular forms in the comparative and superlative.

These are:

- good-better-best
- bad-worse-worst
- far-further-furthest
- many-more-most
- much-more-most
- little-less-least

What if I want to compare things which are similar?

The most common structure for this is to use the as + adjective / adverb + as structure, namely:

- Ben is **as tall as** Imran.
- My team played **as badly as** yours.

Top Tip: Beware double comparatives.

For example: Eggs are **more** **cheaper** than bread.

What are the grammatical rules for making comparative and superlative adverbs?

There are three main categories that adverbs can be divided into when forming their comparative and superlative forms: *~ly* adverbs, adverbs with one syllable, and irregular adverbs. Each of these types follows a different pattern, as outlined below.

1. *~ly* adverbs

~ly adverbs take their comparative and superlative forms in the same way as three-syllable adjectives, namely *more* + adverb and *the most* + adverb.

- She ran **slowly** so that her son could overtake her and win.
- She ran **more slowly** than her son so that he could overtake her and win.
- Of all the competitors, she ran **the most slowly**, and so came last.

2. Adverbs with only one syllable

Adverbs with one syllable take their comparative and superlative forms in the same way as adjectives with one syllable, namely + *~er* and + *~est*.

- Terry ran **fast**.
- Terry ran **faster** than his mother.
- Terry was **the fastest** of all the children.

Other examples of this type include: *close*, *deep*, *easy*, *hard*, *late*, *long*, *low*, *near*, *slow*, *soon* and *straight*.

3. Irregular adverbs

The following adverbs are irregular and take the following base, comparative and superlative forms: *well-better-the best*; *badly-worse-the worst*; *far-further/the furthest*; *much-more-most* and *little-less-least*. For example:

- Although Bobby hit the ball **well**, Roddie hit it **better**. However, Noddy hit it **best** of all.

What words increase / decrease the impact of comparative adverbs?

When using comparative adverbs, it is sometimes useful to be able to express the degree to which the two things are different. For example, the sentence above could be rewritten as: *Roddie hit the ball **much better** than Bobby*. Other common intensifiers in English include *far*, *significantly*, *considerably*, *(quite) a lot*, *a good / great deal* and *a good / fair bit*. There is also a group of words which can do the opposite, as this sentence shows: *Roddie hit the ball **slightly better** than Bobby*. Other common intensifiers in English include *(just) a bit* and *a little (bit)*.

D

Activation







1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following table with information about how the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives are formed.

Description of adjective	Comparative	Superlative
one syllable		
one syllable ending with one vowel and one consonant		
one- or two-syllable adjectives ending with e		
two-syllable ending with ~y		
<i>common / likely / pleasant</i> , etc.		
Two-syllable, not ending with ~y / three-syllable		

2. Check your understanding.

Look at the information below and say whether the statements which follow are true or false.

Weather Today Around the World					
London	Riyadh	Buenos Aires	Rome	Paris	Moscow
					
25°C	35°C	7°C	15°C	23°C	7°C

- London is significantly hotter than Paris. **True / False**
- It is as cold in Moscow as in Buenos Aires. **True / False**
- The sun is shining most brightly in Riyadh. **True / False**
- It is much sunnier in Paris than Rome. **True / False**

3. Create your own.

Complete the following sentences in an appropriate way using a comparative or superlative adjective or adverb form.

Example: The Empire State Building ... used to be the tallest building in the world / is taller than the Eiffel Tower.

- The United States of America _____

- London _____

- My best friend _____

- Football _____

Where in a sentence should adjectives and adverbs be positioned?



'I'm glad you like adverbs. I adore them; they are the only qualifications I really much respect.'

Henry James (1843–1916)
American author

A Reflection

Read through the three sentences in the left-hand column. In each case, the same adverb is used, but in a different position.

I have visited Spain only.

I have only visited Spain.

Only I have visited Spain.

Have you ever been to Europe?

Have you ever lived in Spain?

Do you know anyone else who has visited Spain?

Consider the specific meaning of the sentence, and decide which question in the right-hand column each is a response to.

B Contextualization

Look at the following groups of sentences. In each case, decide in which of the sentences the adjectives are in the correct order.

1.
 - a. It's an interesting, new concept.
 - b. It's a new, interesting concept.
2.
 - a. I love the beautiful, tall, old buildings in New York.
 - b. I love the old, tall, beautiful buildings in New York.
 - c. I love the tall, beautiful, old buildings in New York.
3.
 - a. That's her cotton, warm sleeping bag.
 - b. That's her warm, cotton sleeping bag.
 - c. That's her sleeping, cotton warm bag.
4.
 - a. The university bought grey six computer screens.
 - b. The university bought grey computer six screens.
 - c. The university bought six grey computer screens.

C Explanation

Why does adverbial position matter?

In some languages, it does not matter where the **adverb** is positioned in a **sentence**. In English, however, the order is important. The example sentences in Part A make this very clear – the position of *only* can completely change the emphasis of the sentence. Thus, in each of the responses, *only* is put in a different position according to the specific meaning it wants to show. In each case, the word being modified by *only* appears in bold.

- Have you ever been to Europe? *I have visited **Spain** only.* (i.e., *I have not been to any other countries*)
- Have you ever lived in Spain? *I have **only visited** Spain.* (i.e., *I only stayed there for a short period of time*)
- Do you know anyone else who has visited Spain? *Only **I** have visited Spain.* (i.e., *nobody else has, just me*)

Where can adverbs be positioned?

There are three main positions for adverbs in a sentence:

1. Initial position (before the subject)
2. Mid-position (between the subject and the verb, or after *be* when it is the main verb)
3. End position (after the direct object; at the end of a clause)

What follows is a guide as to where adverbs can go. As Step 18 made clear, adverbs are very tricky **parts of speech**. Therefore, this guide does not have to be followed strictly, but it is a useful default position to have. Depending on the specific emphasis of the sentence, the order might be changed.

Initial position ¹	Mid-position ³	End position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking adverbs (<i>next, however, subsequently</i>) • Comment / viewpoint adverbs² (<i>luckily, hopefully, frankly</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverbs of frequency (<i>often, rarely, never</i>) • Adverbs of certainty (<i>probably, certainly, possibly</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverbs of manner (<i>correctly, carefully, angrily</i>) • Adverbs of place (<i>downstairs, south, elsewhere</i>) • Adverbs of time⁴ (<i>tomorrow, yesterday, sometimes</i>)

Notes:

¹ Such adverbs are almost always followed by a comma.

² These adverbs provide information about the opinion of the speaker/writer over the whole sentence.

³ When *be* is the main verb, these adverbs come afterwards. When an auxiliary verb is used, they come between it and the main verb. Hence:

- *She never comes to class.*
- *She is never here.*
- *She will never pass the course.*

⁴ If you do not want to put emphasis on the time, place at the beginning of the sentence (e.g., *Yesterday, I ...*).

What about adjectives? Where do they go?

In English, adjectives almost always come before the noun they describe or modify. For example, *a green book*, *a square room*, *cold weather*. This is different to many languages, where adjectives come after nouns. Some adjectives can only come before the nouns they describe (known as **'attributive-only'** adjectives), whereas others can only come afterwards (known as **'predicative-only'**). For example, it is only possible to say the main reason rather than *the reason was main*. Likewise, *your food is ready* is possible, but not *your ready food*. The Grammar box on the right lists some of the most common adjectives in these categories.

Grammar box:

Attributive-only adjectives

absolute; atomic; complete; countless; digital; eastern (etc.); entire; existing; indoor; introductory; main; maximum; neighbouring; occasional; outright; perfect; positive; pure; real; true; uneasy; utter

Predicative-only adjectives

afraid; alone; asleep; awake; aware; due; ill; ready; sorry; sure; upset

When do adjectives come after the noun?

There are three occasions when adjectives are more likely to appear after the noun:

1. With 'condition' verbs	2. Modifying a pronoun	3. Combined with a superlative adjective
Some adjectives can be used to describe the 'condition' of things or people. In such cases, they come after the verb. In addition to <i>be</i> , <i>feel</i> and <i>sound</i> , other 'condition' verbs include <i>become</i> , <i>get</i> , <i>look</i> , <i>seem</i> and <i>smell</i> . For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He <i>is tall</i>. She <i>felt sleepy</i>. It <i>sounded beautiful</i>. 	When adjectives modify a pronoun, they must come afterwards. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone <i>present</i> enjoyed the show. Those <i>responsible</i> will be punished. Here's something <i>interesting</i> ... 	Adjectives often come after the noun when they are combined with a superlative adjective. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We should drive home by the <i>shortest</i> route <i>possible</i>. It's the <i>hardest</i> job <i>imaginable</i>. It was the <i>best</i> seat <i>available</i>.

What if I want to use more than one adjective to describe a noun?

It is possible to use more than one adjective to describe a noun (but not more than three), although it is not recommended that you do this on a regular basis. When doing so, there is a generally accepted order in which adjectives come, which is represented by the table below. It is important to remember that when more than one adjective is used, they should be separated by a comma.

Determiner; enumerator	Attitude; opinion	Appearance	Age	Colour	Origin; material	Noun used as adjective	Noun
a the their six	bad beautiful good interesting	large square tall vast	new old recent young	blue grey orange red	English foreign cotton stone	sleeping football computer campus	buildings concept screens bag

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Look at the adverbs in the word box below. Write them in the appropriate column of the table as to where they would *generally* appear in a sentence.

ideally	seldom	consequently
honestly	definitely	lazily
weekly	obviously	similarly
inside	tonight	backwards

Initial position	Mid position	End position
		honestly

2. Check your understanding.

Read through the following sentences. In each case, decide which ones have the adverb in the correct position. If it is in the wrong position, rewrite the sentence, putting the adverb in the right place.

a. We had enough money **luckily** to get a taxi.

b. **Upstairs** we are getting a new carpet.

c. I am going to the party tonight **probably**.

d. **Yesterday** they telephoned me.

e. I visit them **rarely** anymore.

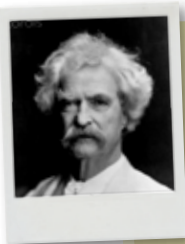
3. Create your own.

Describe the following pictures. Use at least two or three adjectives with every noun.



(a)	(b)	(c)
-----	-----	-----

What more complex forms of adjectives can I use?



'A man's character may be learned from the adjectives he uses in conversation.'

Mark Twain (1835–1910)
American author and humorist

A Reflection

Look at the following pairs of sentences. Then complete the sentence which follows.

- ☐ Tim finds Maths **confusing**.
- ☐ Tim was very **confused** in the lecture yesterday.
- ☐ John said that the film was **boring**. Nothing happened in it!
- ☐ John felt **bored** in the cinema. He said that the movie was so dull.

The _____ form of the adjective is used to show a general truth, whereas the _____ form is used to show a feeling at a specific time.

B Contextualization

What is the grammatical construction of the following compound adjectives? Write your answer in the second column.

Sentence with compound adjective	Grammatical structure of compound adjective	Other examples
He's always forgetting things. He's so absent-minded .	Adjective + past participle	four-legged; middle-aged; old-fashioned
Her children are so beautiful – very good-looking .		
Many religious people have deeply rooted beliefs.		
Plastic is a very hard-wearing material.		
He just bought a five-door car.		
The cakes were home-made . They were delicious!		
The politicians went on a fact- finding mission.		
This is a smoke-free restaurant.		

Can you think of any other examples which follow the same pattern? Write your suggestions in the third column.

C Explanation

Which participle form of the adjective should I use?

The *-ing* form of an **adjective** is used to show a general truth, whereas the *-ed* form is used to show a feeling at a specific time. Mixing these two **participle** forms up is a common mistake. So in the examples presented in Part A, *Tim find maths confusing* and *John said that the film was boring* refer to a general, ongoing truth, i.e., Tim *always* find Maths confusing and John will *always* think that the film is boring. However, when the adjective is in the *-ed* form, the feelings expressed are only temporary, i.e., Tim was *confused in the lecture yesterday*, but he will not be confused in every lecture he goes to.

Grammar box: Commonly confused participle adjectives

amazing/*ed*
astonishing/*ed*
disappointing/*ed*
embarrassing/*ed*
exciting/*ed*
exhausting/*ed*
frightening/*ed*
interesting/*ed*
tiring/*ed*

What are compound adjectives?

A **compound adjective** is a mixture of two (or more) words which together modify a noun. The constituent parts of a compound adjective do not need to be adjectives, but can be a range of different word classes. There is nearly always a **hyphen** joining these words together. A good way to identify whether a hyphen is needed is to ask whether you can say the two parts separately. For example:

- *An elephant is a large, grey animal.* (an elephant is large and grey ✓)
Here, it makes sense when the adjectives are said separately, so no hyphen is needed.
- *That is a good-looking elephant.* (that elephant is good and looking ✗)
Here, it does not make sense when the adjectives are said separately, so a hyphen is used.

The table below categorizes the most commonly used grammatical constructions of these compound adjectives, along with high-frequency examples.

Structure	Example
Adjective + past participle / noun + <i>-ed</i>	<i>He's always forgetting things. He's so absent-minded.</i> <i>bad-tempered; big-headed; cold/warm-blooded; four-legged; left/right-handed; middle-aged; narrow-minded; old-fashioned</i>
Adjective + present participle	<i>Her children are so beautiful – very good-looking.</i> <i>easy-going; free-standing; good-looking; long-lasting; odd-sounding; rapidly increasing; slow-moving; smooth-talking</i>
Adverb + past participle / noun + <i>-ed</i>	<i>Many religious people have deeply rooted beliefs.</i> <i>Brightly lit; densely populated; hard-earned; highly strung; long-haired; short-sighted; well-known; well-prepared</i>
Adverb + present participle	<i>Plastic is a very hard-wearing material.</i> <i>brightly shining; far-reaching; hard-drinking; never-ending; very becoming</i>
Adjective + noun	<i>He just bought a five-door car.</i> <i>deep-sea; full-length; high-volume; large-scale; last-minute; second-hand; special-interest</i>

What is the difference between 'gradeable' and 'ungradeable' adjectives?

Certain adjectives cannot be '**graded**', essentially meaning that they cannot be preceded by words like *very* or *quite*. In the examples given in Part B, for example, you could not say *This is a **very** smoke-free restaurant*. This is because *smoke-free* is a **classifying adjective**. **Extreme adjectives**, where the word is already at the full extent of its meaning (e.g., *boiling*, *freezing*), are also **ungradeable**. (To make these gradeable we would have to say *very hot* or *extremely cold*, but we could not say *very boiling/freezing*). **Absolute adjectives**, where it is impossible to use a comparative / superlative form, are also ungradeable (e.g., we cannot say something is *more dead* than something else).

Adjective-Extreme adjective	
<i>angry-furious</i>	<i>happy-overjoyed</i>
<i>bad-awful</i>	<i>hungry-starving</i>
<i>big-huge</i>	<i>large-massive</i>
<i>crowded-packed</i>	<i>scary-terrifying</i>
<i>dirty-filthy</i>	<i>small-tiny</i>
<i>good-excellent</i>	<i>tired-exhausted</i>

To summarize, the following adjectives cannot be graded:

- **Extreme adjectives** (see table **above**)
- **Absolute adjectives** (e.g., *correct*, *alive*, *dead*, *perfect*, *unique*, *certain*, *mortal*, *pregnant*)
- **Classifying adjectives** (e.g., *nuclear*, *environmental*, *domestic*)

What are 'nominal' adjectives?

Certain adjectives can be used to talk about a whole class or group of people. To do this, the adjective is combined with a determiner (usually *the*). Such adjectives are called '**nominal**' because they essentially function as a noun. High-frequency examples include *the poor*, *the old*, *the new*, *the sick*, *the wealthy*, *the blind*, *the deaf*, and *the innocent*. Some nationalities may also be referred to in this way, such as *the British*, *the Irish* or *the Japanese*. Other common phrases used in this way include *the opposite*, *the contrary* and *the good*.

Note: nominal adjectives can themselves also be modified by adjectives (*the unhappy poor*), are gradeable (*the very poor*), and can take comparative and superlative forms (*the poorest*).

What pairs of adjectives are commonly mistaken?

The following list represents commonly confused pairs of adjectives. Ensure that you are clear about the differences in meaning:

- **disinterested** (*objective*) vs **uninterested** (*lacking interest*)
- **economic** (*relating to money*) vs **economical** (*good value*)
- **extended** (*lengthened*) vs **extensive** (*to a great degree*)
- **fewer** (*used with countable and individual nouns*) vs **less** (*used with uncountable and collective nouns*)
- **high** (*distance from ground*) vs **tall** (*height of vertical items*)
- **historic** (*famous*) vs **historical** (*in the past*)
- **last** (*opposite of first*) vs **latter** (*opposite of former*)
- **many** (*used with countable nouns*) vs **much** (*used with uncountable nouns*)

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following sentences in your own words.

- a. The difference between gradeable and ungradeable adjectives is

- b. A nominal adjective is

- c. Hyphens should be used in compound adjectives when

2. Check your understanding.

Read through the following sentences and correct any adjective problems.

- a. He is a very unique singer. There is nobody else in the world who sounds like him.
- b. It was a very hot day yesterday. It was completely boiling!
- c. There are much reasons for this.
- d. Many famous historical people were born in London.
- e. That book was frightened – terrifying in fact.

3. Create your own.

- (i) Rewrite the following sentences using a nominal adjective. An example has been done for you.

- a. Many people are afraid of new things like technology.

Many people are afraid of the new.

- b. I think rich members of society should pay more in taxes.

- c. People from Britain like to watch football.

- d. The government should provide more support to blind and deaf people.

- (ii) Look up the meanings of five of the compound adjectives found in the table on page XX and write sentences which show their meaning.

- a. _____

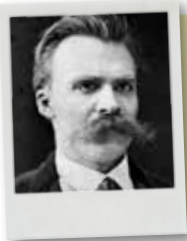
- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

- e. _____

What are conjunctions and connectors and how can they be used to link ideas?



'Invisible threads are the strongest ties.'

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)

German classical scholar, philosopher and critic of culture

A Reflection

Read the two passages below. Which do you think is written in the better English?

A The first job interview I ever had was a disaster. I left plenty of time to get to the train station. I was still nearly late. My bus broke down on the way. I had to walk the last kilometre. I finally arrived. I was very sweaty. Luckily, I had a spare shirt with me. If I had not had a spare shirt, I would have had to buy a new one. These were the problems. I got the job. They liked me so much, I got promoted!

B The first job interview I ever had was a disaster. Although I left plenty of time to get to the train station, I was still nearly late because my bus broke down on the way. As a result, I had to walk the last kilometre. When I finally arrived, I was very sweaty. Luckily, I had a spare shirt with me; otherwise I would have had to buy a new one. In spite of all these problems, I got the job. In fact, they liked me so much, I got promoted!

B Contextualization

Look back at the 'better' passage in Part A. Underline the words/phrases which make it easier to read. You should find seven in total.

Complete the table below with the words/phrases you find, and state what relationship it shows (e.g., cause and effect, concession/contrast), and what they are linking (i.e., sentences or clauses).

Word/phrase	What relationship is it showing?	What is it linking?
<u>As a result,</u>	cause and effect	two sentences
<u>Although</u>	concession/contrast	two clauses

For the relationships you have identified in the middle column, can you think of any other linking words which would go in this category?

Example: Cause and effect: *as a result; therefore; since; thus; accordingly.*

c Explanation

What are conjunctions and connectors?

Conjunctions and **connectors** are some of the most useful words in English. They help you show how your ideas are linked together. Commonly used **linking devices**, such as *however*, *although* and *because* are all necessary to help you move from one idea to another, and to show the relationship between different ideas. Some words, such as *firstly/secondly/thirdly* are called 'signposts' and can help point the listener/reader in the right direction.



Without these words, as in Passage A on page XX, your speaking or writing sounds like a collection of bullet points: *Here's one fact, here's another fact, here's yet another fact*. The difference between Passage A and B is clear to see: the latter is much easier to read, and makes much more sense.

What are the main relationships that conjunctions and connectors show?

There are many words which can be used to link words in English. The list below presents ten types of relationship which conjunctions and connectors can show. Common linking words are also given, within the context of a **sentence**. Note that these sentences also contain important relevant information about linking words, which will help to build your knowledge about this important group of words.

Grammar box: Thinking point

To decide which linking word to use, ask these two questions:

1. What I am linking? Are they clauses or sentences?
2. What is the relationship between these components?

1. To show **contrast / concession**

- **'Therefore'** shows cause and effect, **whereas / whilst** **'although'** shows concession.
- **'Therefore'** links sentences. **In contrast / On the other hand**, **'whilst'** joins clauses.
- Sentence linking words are followed by commas, **but** clause linking words are not.
- **Despite / In spite of** their usefulness, it is possible to overuse linking words.
- It is difficult to improve your understanding of linking words. **Nevertheless**, you must try.
- People may use linking words in their own language **yet** find it difficult in English.
- Adverbs are a word class used for linking. **However**, conjunctions are more common.

2. To emphasize / highlight

- Linking words are important. **In fact / indeed**, they are essential for good English.
- **Moreover** is used to add information. **Specifically**, it means that the information which follows is more important than the information which precedes it.

3. To show a sequence / time relationship

- **When / While** using linking words, you need to know whether they join sentences or clauses.
- **Firstly**, learn a few new linking words. **Secondly**, use them. **Thirdly**, check them.
- **After** you have correctly used a linking word in context, you gain confidence.
- **Until** you understand linking words, you will never be able to talk like a native speaker.

4. To show cause and effect

- **Since / Because of / Due to** a lack of knowledge, people often repeat the same linking words, whether they are appropriate or not.
- Three of the most common linking words used in English are **but, so and because**. **As such / Therefore / Thus / For this reason / Hence / Accordingly**, you should get to know these well.

5. To add information / reinforce

- **Besides / as well as** adding information and comparing, linking words have other uses.
- It is common to overuse the same linking words. **Consequently**, you should learn more.
- When using linking words, first ask yourself, *What am I linking?* **In addition / Furthermore / Moreover**, you should ask, *What is the relationship between the components?*

6. To compare

- Normally, only one linking word would be found in each sentence. **Similarly / In the same way / Likewise / Equally**, you should not use too many prepositions in one sentence.
- **Both** conjunctions **and** adverbs can link ideas in English.

7. To present alternatives

- Use **'however'** to indicate contrast. **Alternatively / On the other hand**, you can use **'nevertheless'**.

8. To provide supporting information

- There are many examples of linking words, **such as 'therefore'** and **'but'**.
- Linking words are useful. **To illustrate this**, I will show a paragraph with and without them.
- Many linking words contain prepositions. We can see this, **for example / for instance**, in phrases such as **'in conclusion'**, **'as such'** and **'with regards to'**.

9. For transition

- **Regarding / With regards to / With respect to** linking words, you should avoid using the same ones all the time.

10. To summarize

- **In conclusion / In summary / To conclude / To sum up**, linking words are vital.

What do they link?

Linking devices can link either clauses with other clauses (C-C), or sentences with other sentences (S-S). The following two sentences taken from three sentences in Passage B demonstrate this.

1. **Although** I left plenty of time to get to the train station, I was still nearly late.
linking word + dependent clause + comma + independent clause
2. My bus broke down on the way. **As a result**, I had to walk the last kilometre.
sentence + linking word + comma + sentence

As sentence 1 shows, the linking device precedes a **dependent (subordinate) clause**, and is followed by an **independent clause**. It is possible to swap the two halves of the sentence around (i.e., *I was still nearly late although I left plenty of time to get to the train station*) so long as the

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Without looking at the previous pages, brainstorm as many linking words as you can remember for each category.

To show contrast / concession	To emphasize / highlight	To show a sequence / time relationship	To show cause and effect	To add information / reinforce
To compare	To present alternatives	To provide supporting information	For transition	To summarize

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following gaps with an appropriate linking device.

The Chinese language has the most native speakers in the world, _____ English has the most total speakers (c. 1.5 billion). _____, English is the common international language of business. Several other languages, _____ French and Japanese, _____ have more than 100 million speakers. _____ the former is spoken by many people as a second language, the overwhelming majority of the latter (99 per cent) speak it as a first language.

3. Create your own.

Read the following list of facts about Walt Disney. When you have done this, write a short paragraph about his life. Try to use at least four linking words.

- ☐ Walt Disney is famous for making cartoons. Some of his most famous ones are *Dumbo*, *Snow White* and *The Jungle Book*.
- ☐ His films were nominated 59 times for an Oscar. He won 22 times and won four honorary Oscars.
- ☐ He created many famous characters: Donald Duck, Goofy, Mickey Mouse.
- ☐ He was the first voice of Mickey Mouse. He was not an actor.
- ☐ Non-TV/film interests: Disneyland theme park was opened in California in 1955. Disney World was opened in Florida in 1971.
- ☐ He died in 1966, aged 65. He had lung cancer.
- ☐ He had an enormous influence on media and leisure.

What are prepositions and how are they used in English?



'A preposition is a terrible thing to end a sentence with.'

Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

British politician and UK Prime Minister 1940–1945 and 1951–1955

A Reflection

Read the following definition of preposition.

'A word that is used before a noun, a noun phrase, or a pronoun, connecting it to another word.'

(<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>)

At, in and on are three common prepositions used in English. Make a list of as many other prepositions that you know in the box below.

Below are some of the main problems associated with using prepositions in English. Think about how often these things happen to you.

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently
I leave out prepositions when they are needed.			
I put the preposition in the wrong place.			
I use a preposition when it is not necessary.			
I guess which preposition to use because I don't know.			

B Contextualization

Read the sentences below and underline all the prepositions you can find.

I love being in my garden in summer.

I've lived here for 11 years.

Who will the letter come from?

We met at a party.

It's under the chair.

We flew across the Atlantic.

Write the correct preposition in the gaps below to show how they are used.

C Explanation

What are the most commonly used prepositions in English?

Of the 25 most commonly used words in English, eight are prepositions, namely: *at, by, for, in, of, on, to* and *with*. Clearly, a good understanding of prepositions is important to speaking and writing good English. In addition to these eight, other commonly used prepositions appear in the table below. Note that some of these words can also be in other **word classes** (in particular, **adverbs** and **conjunctions**).

Most common prepositions in English

about	before	down	onto	towards
above	behind	during	out	under
across	below	except	outside	underneath
after	beneath	from	over	until
against	beside	inside	past	up
along	between	into	since	upon
among	beyond	like	through	versus
around	but	near	throughout	within
as	despite	off	till	without

What are the major categories of prepositions in English?

Thinking about prepositions in terms of ‘categories’ can help develop your understanding about how they should be used. The three main categories generally used in English are **place and position, direction and movement**, and **time**. The table below shows commonly used prepositions in these categories, along with a basic definition and example sentences.

Prepositions of place and position	Prepositions of direction and movement	Prepositions of time
At is used for an exact or particular position or place: <i>I'm at work; We met at a party; She's at the centre of things.</i>	To/towards is used for a specific destination: <i>We went to Rio; He kicked it towards the goal; Move it to the right.</i>	At is used for specific times or ages: <i>Let's go at 10 o'clock; I work best at night; I'm going at the weekend.</i>
In is used for an enclosed space (a space with defined boundaries): <i>I live in New York; She's in the garden; I found it in the car.</i>	Through/into refer to movement in three-dimensional (3D) space: <i>A river flows through the city; I walked through the crowd.</i>	On is used for specific days and dates: <i>It starts on Monday; My birthday is on 24th May; Phone me on the hour, every hour.</i>
On is used for a surface (in physical contact with something): <i>The picture is on the wall; It's on the table; I'm on a boat.</i>	Across/over describe movement from one side to another: <i>We flew across the Atlantic; She threw it over the tree.</i>	In is used for months, seasons or general periods of time: <i>It's in May; We go in the summer; It happened in the 20th Century.</i>
By/near/beside refer to objects which are close to or touching: <i>The house is by the sea; It's near me; She sat beside me on the train.</i>	Along describes movement, or position, in the same direction/line: <i>We drove along the road; The houses were along the river.</i>	Since refers to points in time (i.e., from point X until now): <i>I've lived here since 2004; I've been ill since yesterday.</i>

What other prepositions are commonly used in English?

Preposition	What it refers to	Examples
By	Cause of an action (person, means or method)	<i>Was this drawn by you? It happened by mistake; We went by car.</i>
For	Purpose or reason	<i>What is this for? For my birthday, I am going to a restaurant.</i>
From	Origin, source or cause	<i>It's made from glass; Who will the letter come from?</i>
Of	Shows relationship between words (e.g., possession, origin, amount)	<i>first page of the book; a litre of water; It's made of wood.</i>
With(out)	(Not) having, together, using, concerning	<i>I want a room with a view; He lives with his father; She did it with skill but without enthusiasm</i>

How can I use prepositions well?

- Prepositions are difficult to learn**, so don't feel bad if you find them tricky.
- Prepositions generally have several different functions and uses.** For example, the Oxford English Dictionary lists 37 separate uses of *in*.
- Prepositions are a 'closed class' of words.** This means that no new prepositions will be created. So once you know them, you know them all!
- If you are not sure which preposition to use, make an intelligent guess.** More often than not, you will be correct. You almost certainly know more than you think you do.
- Prepositions are often combined with nouns and verbs to make specific phrases.** For example: *changes/differences + in; evidence/reason + for; suffer/benefit + from; agree/adapt to*. You should try and remember these as pieces of vocabulary rather than grammatical constructions.
- If you are unsure if a preposition commonly goes with a noun or verb, check it online.** Look for particular phrases using a search engine to see if they really do exist, and how the phrase can be used.
- Don't use too many prepositions in the same sentence.** Since the job of a preposition is to link words together, the more links you have, the more difficult it is to follow the sentence. Be careful not to use more than three in a sentence!
- Learn how to use prepositional phrases.** Many useful phrases in English use two (or more) prepositions, such as: *according to, apart from, as for, because of, by means of, due to, except for, in order to, in place of, instead of, on account of, out of, up to, with regard to and with respect to*.
- In speaking, prepositions can have strong or weak forms.** Since prepositions are **function words**, the weak form is common. Notice the difference: *Shall I go at [ət/] 10 o'clock? No, go at [æt/] once.*
- There is no grammatical reason why you cannot end a sentence with a preposition.** However, some people think it is not good style, especially in more formal situations. For the most part, though, ending a sentence with a preposition is acceptable and sounds more natural – e.g., *Who was the letter from?* rather than *From whom was the letter?*

D**Activation****1. Complete and comprehend.**

Complete the following statements about prepositions with an appropriate word or phrase.

- a. The three main categories of prepositions are _____ and _____ (e.g., *at*, *under*), _____ and _____ (e.g., *across*, *towards*) and _____ (e.g., *since*, *after*).
- b. Prepositions are a 'closed class' of words. This means that _____
- c. If you are unsure what prepositions to use, you should _____
- d. To avoid confusion, don't use more than _____ prepositions in a sentence.

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the gaps below with an appropriate preposition. Sometimes more than one answer may be possible.

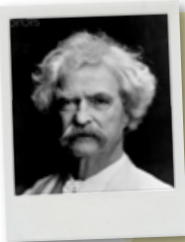
My favourite object is a vase given _____ me _____ my mother _____ 1998 _____ my 18th birthday. She gave it _____ me _____ a beautiful card she made herself. I have had the vase _____ 15 years. It is made mostly _____ glass. I keep it _____ a shelf _____ my bedroom, _____ a photograph _____ my family. _____ I die, I will leave it _____ my daughter.

3. Create your own.

Chose four of the preposition phrases on page XX, and write sentences below which demonstrate your understanding.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

What are determiners and how are they used in English?



'Sometimes too much ... is barely enough.'

Mark Twain (1835–1910)

American author and humorist

A Reflection

In the sentences below, the determiners are highlighted. Read the sentences and then decide whether the statements which follow are true or false.

- ☐ You can play **any** game you like, any time.
- ☐ I have **other** friends who could come.
- ☐ There is **another** way to do this.
- ☐ **What** time? What do you like doing?
- ☐ His reasons were unclear.
- ☐ English is **their** favourite subject.
- ☐ I don't like **this** house, but I do like **that** one.
- ☐ **Which** countries have you visited?
- ☐ There's **not much** food left. You'd better hurry if you want **a** cake.
- ☐ She has **little** experience of teaching. She needs to get **more** experience.
- ☐ **Few** people passed **the** exam. **Fewer** people actually got **an** 'A'.
- ☐ Let's meet in **either** London or Paris. / But I like **neither** London nor Paris.
- ☐ Have you got **enough** money?
- ☐ **Both my** parents went with me.

Statement	True	False
Determiners come before nouns/noun phrases.		
Determiners are content words (rather than function words).		
More than one determiner can be used in a phrase.		
Determiners have a similar function to adjectives.		
Determiners are not used very often in English.		

B Contextualization

Write the determiners from Part A in the correct column in the table below.

C Explanation

What are determiners?

Determiners are a word class consisting of:

- **Articles** (*a; an; the*)
- **Demonstratives** (*this/these; that/those*)
- **Possessives** (*my; your; his; her; its; our; your; their; whose*)
- **Quantifiers** (e.g., *much / many*)

Like other **function words**, determiners do not change form, and do not have **synonyms**. Although they are short and can easily be missed or forgotten, these words have an important role in English. They tell us a lot about nouns – for example, whether the speaker is talking about something in general or thinking of specific examples, or how much or how many of something they are talking about. Determiners are common in some languages. If so, using them in English can be reasonably straightforward. If they are not, they can be extremely difficult. (**Note:** articles are dealt with separately in ►Step 24 and ►Step 25.)

Note: Determiners vs adjectives

Although they have a similar function, determiners differ from adjectives as follows:

- Several adjectives may be combined and put before a noun (e.g., *the big, red book*). With determiners, this is less frequent.
- Except *much / many, few* and *little*, determiners do not change their form.
- Adjectives can be used with **countable** or **uncountable nouns**. Determiners may be restricted to one or the other.

When determiners and adjectives are used together, determiners tend to come first.

What is the difference between general and specific determiners?

Determiners can be divided into ones which are **general** and **specific**. General determiners are those used when talking about things in general, and when the listener/reader does not know exactly what we are talking about. The general determiners are: *a, an, any, another, other* and *what*.

- **Any** is used with a singular / uncountable noun when talking about all of the items (e.g., *You can play **any** game you like, any time*).
- **Another** is used for an additional person/thing (e.g., *Do you know another friend who could come? Is there another way to do this?*) **Other** is the **plural** form (e.g., *I have **other** friends who could come; There is **another** way to do this*)
- **What** is used for general **questions** (e.g., ***What** time? **What** do you like doing?*)

Specific determiners are those used when it is thought that the listener/reader knows exactly what we are talking about. The specific determiners are: *the, which* and all demonstratives and possessives.

- **Possessives** are used to show ownership – i.e., what belongs to whom (e.g., ***His** reasons were unclear; English is **their** favourite subject*).
- **Demonstratives** are used to specify whether something is **near** in distance or time (*this/these*), or **far** in distance or time (*that/those*) as the table indicates (e.g., *I don't like **this** house, but I do like **that** one*).
- **Which** is used for specific questions (e.g., ***Which** countries have you visited?*)

	Near	Far
Singular	this	that
Plural	these	those

How do I use quantifiers?

Quantifiers, as the name suggests, provide information about the quantity of a noun. If the noun is countable (e.g., *apples, chairs*), the quantifier will relate to how **many** there are; if the noun is uncountable (e.g., *water, bread*), it will relate to how **much** there is. Some quantifiers can only be used with countable nouns, and others only with uncountable nouns. Others, however, can be used with both, as outlined below.

'Countable' quantifiers



← none of a couple of (a) few^{1, 2} several / a number of many¹ →

'Uncountable' quantifiers



← no not much little^{1, 2} a little² / a bit of a good deal of much¹ / a great deal of →

Countable and 'uncountable' quantifiers



← a lack of some a lot of / lots of / plenty of all of →

Notes

- ¹ **Comparative** and **superlative** forms of these determiners can also be used (i.e., *more / most; less / least; fewer / fewest*).
- ² Note the difference between *little / few* (= not enough) and *a little / a few* (not many, but sufficient). e.g., *She has little experience of teaching* (= she has just started teaching) vs *She has a little experience of teaching* (she has some experience, which may be enough).
- ³ *Enough* is another important quantifier, meaning 'as much as is necessary' (e.g., *Have you got enough money?*)

What are distributive determiners?

'**Distributives**' are determiners which refer to individual components of a group, not the group as a whole. They talk about a 'specific' part of a 'general' class.

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Write brief definitions of how the following determiners are used. Then check back in the text to see if you are correct.

any: _____

this: _____

that: _____

its: _____

several: _____

some: _____

each: _____

neither: _____

double: _____

2. Check your understanding.

(i) Identify and correct the mistake in each of the following sentences.

- a. There ~~are many~~ equipment in the laboratory.

There is a lot of / plenty of equipment (as equipment is an uncountable noun)

- b. Did you buy big the house?

- c. She has few grey hairs. She's getting old!

- d. I'm really enjoying that ice-cream.

(ii) Select which determiner(s) in each sentence are possible.

- a. She doesn't drink *much* / *any* / *many* coffee – maybe two cups a week.
 b. To remain healthy, you should take *some* / *a lot of* / *an* exercise every day.
 c. I have lived in *both* / *either* / *neither* France and England.
 d. Please could you give me *this* / *that* / *your* coat.

3. Create your own.

Write sentences about these four pictures using an appropriate determiner.

A



B



C



D



- a. _____
 b. _____
 c. _____
 d. _____

How are articles used in English (1)?



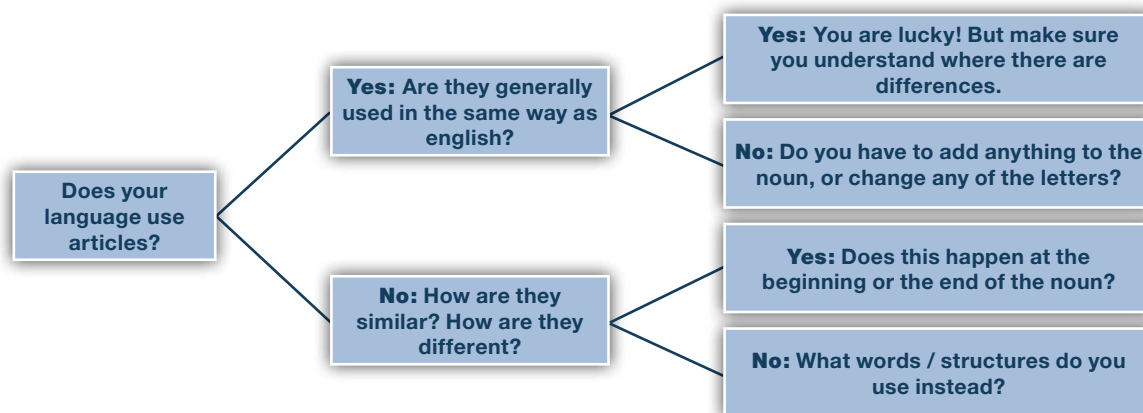
'We should have the 'art' rather than the 'article'.'

Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

British politician and UK Prime Minister 1940–1945 and 1951–1955

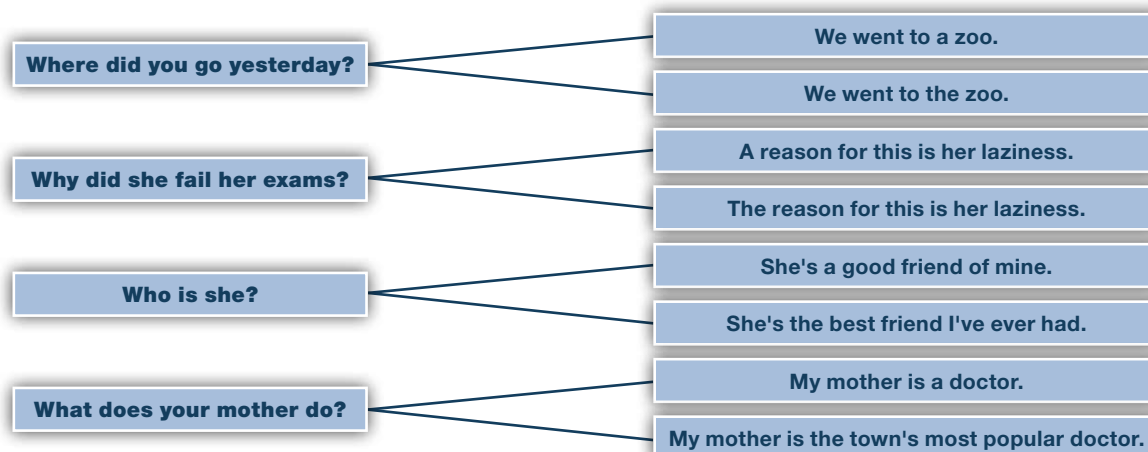
A Reflection

Follow this flowchart to think about how your own language is similar or different to English in how it uses articles. In particular, think about what you need to do to nouns if you want to identify them as being general or specific.



B Contextualization

Four questions are presented below. In each case, two possible answers are given. What is the difference in meaning between each answer?



C Explanation

Why are articles important?

Articles are difficult. They are also very important. As noted in ►Step 23, they are a type of **determiner** – a type of **function word**. This means that their grammatical job is to give more information about nouns, specifically saying whether they are being used in a general or a specific way. There are three main reasons why articles are so important in English, namely:

- They are used extremely frequently in English. *The*, *a* and *an* constitute around 15 per cent of the words in spoken and written English.
- **Native speakers** hardly ever make article mistakes. Therefore, if you want to sound more like a native speaker, a good understanding of articles is crucial.
- Misusing articles can significantly change your meaning. If you use them incorrectly, you can easily confuse your listener/reader.

This step gives a general overview of articles. Deeper analysis is given in ►Step 25.

What difference do articles make?

The following examples show how using *the* or *a/an* (or no article at all) can change the meaning of a sentence. Specific explanation about their usage follows on page **XX**.

Speaker

We went to
zoo yesterday

Listener's response

Which zoo
is she talking
about?

In this example, the speaker has not used any article. Key information about the following noun (i.e., zoo) is therefore missing. This is confusing for the listener. It is also grammatically incorrect, and would sound very strange to a native speaker.

Speaker

We went
to the zoo
yesterday

Listener's response

We both live
in London, and there
is only one zoo there –
so she must mean
London Zoo.

In this example, the speaker expects the listener to know which zoo is being talked about. Using *the* suggests 'we have a common understanding about which zoo I am talking about. My listener will understand the specific zoo I mean.'

Speaker

We went to a
zoo yesterday

Listener's response

She doesn't
think I know which zoo
she means. I'd better ask
her, Which zoo did
you go to?

What are the two articles in English?

The two articles in English are known as the **definite** and the **indefinite article**. In general terms, the definite article (*the*) refers to things where the speaker and listener are both clear which thing/person is being talked about – i.e., they both have a specific understanding. In contrast, the indefinite article (*a/an*) is used when the object or person is not specific – where there is no shared understanding. To illustrate this, compare these answers to the question, *Why did she fail her exams?* from Part B.

- **A reason for this is her laziness.**
 - This answer shows that laziness is just **one** reason she failed her exams – other answers are also possible.
- **The reason for this is her laziness.**
 - This answer shows that laziness was the **only** reason she failed her exams. There are no other reasons.

Use of the definite article

Some of the specific situations in which *the* is used are as follows:

- When we refer to something specific which has already been mentioned.
 - *Shall I retell **the** joke?* (= we know which joke)
- When it is clear which particular thing is meant because of shared knowledge.
 - *Have you fed **the** cats?* (= our cats, which we both know about)
- When it is clear which particular thing is meant because of a shared situation.
 - *Please can you shut **the** door?* (= we are in the same room, you know which door)
- For unique objects.
 - ***The** moon orbits around **the** Earth.* (= only one exists)
- With superlatives.
 - *She's **the** best friend I've ever had.* (= only one exists)
- With ordinal numbers.
 - *Bolt was **the** first to finish, as usual.*

Use of the indefinite article

Some of the specific situations in which *a/an* are used are as follows:

- When it is not known which one is meant.
 - *I bought **a** apple on the way to work.* (though *the* would be used subsequently, if talking about the same apple)
- When it does not matter which one is meant.
 - *Could I borrow **a** pen please?*
 - *I would like to speak to **a** manager.*
- To classify people or things, usually after a **copular verb**.
 - *A cat is **a** type of mammal.*
 - *My mother is **a** doctor.*

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

(i) Write a brief summary of when you should use the definite article.

(ii) Write a brief summary of when you should use the indefinite article.

2. Check your understanding.

Match the sentences on the left with the grammatical explanation on the right.

1. Have you got a job?	a. Superlative form of the adjective, so definite article used.
2. That's the man I saw earlier.	b. Shared understanding, so definite article used.
3. He's the most amazing cook.	c. General classification / categorization, so indefinite article is used.
4. Could I have a cup of tea please?	d. General question to introduce a topic, so indefinite article used.
5. She is a very happy person.	e. General request, so indefinite article used.

3. Create your own.

Complete the text below with the appropriate form of the definite or indefinite article.

New York is _____ very interesting city. In fact, it is probably _____ most interesting city I have ever visited. Although it's not _____ biggest city in _____ world, it does feel like it sometimes! _____ Empire State Building is _____ important symbol of _____ city, as is _____ Statue of Liberty. _____ interesting fact about _____ Statue of Liberty is that it was _____ present from France, back in 1886.

How are articles used in English (2)?



'I like the indefinite.'

Gerhard Richter (1932–)
German painter and visual artist

A Reflection

Match each sentence on the left with its correct meaning of *hospital* on the right.

1. Is there a hospital near here?	a. General statement about what hospitals should be like – i.e., this is a general characteristic.
2. The appointment is at the hospital.	b. Use of hospital in a fixed expression – many of these phrases do not use articles.
3. Hospitals have to be clean places.	c. Although it looks general, the speaker is talking about a specific, defined group of hospitals.
4. The hospitals which I run are all clean.	d. Shared knowledge about which hospital is being discussed – i.e., we both know which one you mean.
5. My grandfather is in hospital.	e. General statement where no specific hospital is being discussed – i.e., any hospital would be suitable.

B Contextualization

The following passage revises some of the main points made in Step 24, and highlights some of the most common article mistakes in English.

Read the passage below, looking closely at the highlighted phrases. When you have done this, answer the questions which follow.

Last night¹, I went to a new restaurant, next to the River Thames² in London³. I went with my friend, Emma-Louise³, to the restaurant⁴. Emma-Louise is originally from France⁵, but now lives in the United States⁵. She had pasta⁶, whilst I had a pizza⁶. She is currently working as an administrator⁷ in a university⁸ in Los Angeles. She has been working there since 2012⁹ – July⁹, I think. Ultimately, she would like to work for an international organization, such as UNICEF¹⁰ or the UNDP¹⁰.

¹ Why is no article used here?

C Explanation

What difference does the specific context make to how I use articles?

The context a word appears in is critically important when deciding whether the definite, indefinite or no article is required. For example, the five **sentences** in Part A all use the noun *hospital*, but the article usage is very different in each case. Sentences 1 and 2 highlight the different uses of the **definite** and **indefinite article** outlined in ►Step 24. The other sentences highlight other important aspects of article use.

Answers to Part A:

1e 2d 3a 4c 5b

- **Sentence 3** shows that when you are talking about ‘things in general’ (i.e., when making a wide-ranging point about something), an article is not needed. This can also be true for **uncountable nouns** (e.g., *Respect is important; Safety is critical*). Although **Sentence 4** also uses the plural *hospitals*, it is the head noun (►Step 9) in a specific phrase, and so *the* is required.
- **Sentence 5** uses the fixed expression *in hospital*. There are several common expressions in English related to place, time and movement (and which normally use **prepositions**) which follow the same pattern, and do not require an article. These expressions include, but are not limited to: *at / to university / school; at / to work; at / from home; by day; by phone / letter / email; by car / bus / plane / train; in bed / prison; into town; on foot / holiday / time*.

What are some common article mistakes?

Sometimes people think that the rules for using articles are impossible to understand, and that there is no logic to them. This is not true. Although it can often be difficult to know which article to use, it is not impossible. The passage in Part B highlights ten of the most common article mistakes in English. Each of these points is explained below, along with a rule which summarizes the main point.

1. **Last night** ✓ The last night ✗
Issue: Last is already acting as a **determiner** (►Step 23), meaning ‘the night immediately before this one’. As such, no additional determiner is required.
Rule: Generally speaking, only one determiner is needed for each noun phrase.
2. **The River Thames** ✓ River Thames ✗
Issue: It can be difficult to know which geographical features need an article, and which do not. It is usual for the following to contain articles: rivers, oceans, seas (e.g., *the Atlantic Ocean, the Red Sea*); mountain ranges (e.g., *the Rockies, the Alps*); points on the globe (e.g., *the Equator, the South Pole*); geographical areas (e.g., *the Middle East, the Maghreb*); deserts and forests (e.g., *the Sahara Desert, the Amazonian Rainforest*).
Rule: Some geographical features use an article, but others do not.
3. **London** ✓ **Emma-Louise** ✓ the London ✗ the Emma Louise ✗
Issue: *London* and *Emma-Louise* are both **proper nouns** (i.e., the names of people / things). Generally speaking, proper nouns do not require an article.
Rule: Do not use articles with proper nouns.

4. **The restaurant** ✓ a restaurant ✗

Issue: The restaurant being discussed is the same restaurant as in the previous sentence. This restaurant is now a specific idea (i.e., both the writer and reader know exactly which one is being referred to). As such, the definite article is now used.

Rule: Don't think about the **meaning** of the noun, think about its **usage**. The way it is used is what determines which article is needed.

5. **France** ✓ **the United States** ✓ the France ✗ United States ✗

Issue: It is often unclear which countries require articles and which do not. The general rule is that countries which have a **countable noun** in their name (►Step 8) require *the* (i.e., *states*); countries without such nouns do not. And so, in this example, if we referred to just *America*, we would not need an article. Likewise, if we referred to France in its full form, we *would* need an article, i.e., *the Republic of France*.

Rule: Use *the* in country names when countable nouns are found in the names.

6. **Pasta** ✓ **a pizza** ✓ a pasta ✗ pizza ✗

Issue: In this context, pasta is an uncountable noun, whilst pizza is countable. Generally, uncountable nouns do not require articles.

Rule: Do not use articles with uncountable nouns, unless they are part of a long noun phrase (e.g., *the pasta which I ate at the restaurant*).

7. **An administrator** ✓ administrator ✗

Issue: Missing out a/an before jobs. In many languages, no article is used (e.g., *she is teacher*; *he is accountant*). In English, the indefinite article is required (e.g., *She is a pilot*; *he is an accountant*).

Rule: Use an article when describing someone's job or role.

8. **A university** ✓ an university ✗

Issue: A common mistake when using an is to use it before all words which begin with a **vowel** (i.e., *a-e-i-o-u*), rather than vowel **sounds**. In this example, although university begins with the letter *u*, it begins with the sound /j/, a **consonant** sound. This can happen the other way round as well – for example, we would say an *MP* rather than a *MP* because the initial sound is /e/.

Rule: Use *an* before vowel sounds rather than vowels, and a before consonant sounds rather than consonants.

9. **2012 / July** ✓ the 2012 / the July ✗

Issue: Many time words and phrases do not require an article. For days, months and years, articles are not required.

Rule: Most time phrases do not need an article.

10. **UNICEF** ✓ **the UNDP** ✓ the Unicef ✗ UNDP ✗

Issue: It is often confusing to know whether to use *the* before **abbreviations**. To decide whether an article is required, it is necessary to distinguish acronyms from **initialisms**.

Acronyms are abbreviations which can be said as a whole word without stopping, as in the example *UNICEF* (pronounced *you-knee-sef*). **Initialisms**, on the other hand, are abbreviations which must be spelt out – that is, when you read the, you have to say each letter separately, such as the *UNDP* (*you-en-dee-pee*).

Rule: Initialisms generally require *the*, while acronyms do not.

Summary

1. Although it may not always seem like it, articles are governed by rules and logic. Learning a few key rules will make using articles much easier.
2. Articles are generally used with many geographical features and initialisms.
3. Articles are generally not used with other generalizations, determiners, proper nouns, countries, uncountable nouns, times and acronyms.

D**Activation****1. Complete and comprehend.**

(i) The list below summarizes some of the key things to remember when using articles. Complete the gaps with a relevant word or phrase.

- a. Generally speaking, only one _____ is needed for each noun phrase.
- b. Don't think about the meaning of the noun; think about its _____.
- c. Do not use articles with _____ nouns.
- d. Use *the* in country names when _____ nouns are found in the names.
- e. Use *an* before vowel _____ rather than vowels.

(ii) Are the following statements about articles true or false? If they are false, correct them accordingly.

- a. All geographical features require the definite article.
- b. Uncountable nouns usually take an article.
- c. Many time words and phrases do not require an article.
- d. Acronyms generally require *the*, while acronyms do not.
- e. Many fixed expressions do not need an article.

2. Check your understanding.

Are the articles being used correctly in the following sentences? Use the rules above to help you if you are not sure.

- a. The trust is very important, particularly a trust between parents and the children.
- b. UNESCO and the UNICEF are part of the UN.
- c. The last time you were late, we missed film.
- d. The dogs are amazing animals.
- e. Is he still in the bed? We're going to be late if he doesn't get up.

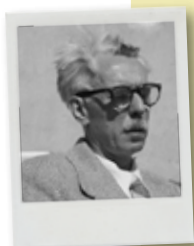
3. Create your own.

Complete the following with the definite article (*the*), the indefinite article (*a/an*) or no article (\emptyset) depending on what you think is required.

[Possible A/W – e.g. BBC
logo/ building]

_____ BBC is _____ major international media organization based in _____ UK. It has
_____ many thousands of employees who work in its _____ London headquarters. It was
founded in _____ 1922. Critics of _____ organization say that it should not get given _____
money by _____ British government. Supporters say it provides _____ very good service.

What have you learnt so far about sentence structure?



'With sixty staring me in the face, I have developed inflammation of the sentence structure ...'

James Thurber (1894–1961)
American cartoonist, author, journalist and playwright

A Reflection

The following words and phrases have all been used in the first 25 steps of this book. Think about what they mean.

Punctuation
Subject Verb Object Countable noun
Auxiliary verb Mother tongue
Postmodification
Premodification Function words
Content words
Passive voice

B Contextualization

All of the terms in the table below have been discussed in the first 25 steps. Try and identify at least one example of each in the text below.

China has the largest population of any country in the world, at around 1.4 billion. The capital city is Beijing, which in 2008 hosted the Olympic Games. Other large cities include Shanghai and Chongqing. They both have a population in excess of 10 million. One of the things which China is most famous for is its Great Wall. It is supposed to be the only man-made object that can be seen from space.

1. Proper noun	China	5. Preposition of time	
2. Verb in the present simple		6. Regular past simple	
3. Article		7. Subject pronoun	
4. Superlative adjective		8. Relative pronoun	

See feedback on the above on page XX.

c Explanation

What has been taught in the first 25 steps about sentence structure?

If you have worked through the first 25 steps of this book, you already know quite a lot about **sentence** structure. You might not believe it, but you know more than you think you do! Since this step comes halfway through the book, its purpose is to highlight some of the key points about sentence structure which have already been looked at. If, when you read about them, you do not quite understand the meaning of some of these points, you might want to go back to those steps and revise your understanding, or look them up in the Glossary at the back of this book.

► **Step 1** raises four key issues which have a negative impact on the overall quality of a sentence, namely: *using the incorrect form of words, using incorrect sentence structure, using incorrect **punctuation** and using a poor **style**.*

► **Step 2** gives an overview of the different words classes in English (i.e., **noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronouns, determiner, conjunction** and **prepositions**). It also looks at the difference between **content words** and **function words**. These groups of words have to be in balance within a sentence.

► **Step 3** focuses on how using different grammar can have a significant impact on a sentence.

► **Step 4** shows you how your **mother tongue** (i.e., first language) can influence much of your English. This is true at the word and the sentence level. Whilst there may be similarities to English in the way sentences are made in your own language, there are likely to be many differences as well.

► **Step 5** looks at the difference between spoken and written grammar, looking in particular at the kind of grammar which would more often be used in written, formal sentences.

► **Steps 6, 7 and 8** looks at different categories of nouns, and also at pronouns and how they work in a sentence. Nouns are the bricks of a sentence – the building blocks – which usually carry its main meaning.

► **Steps 9 and 10** introduce the idea of **noun phrases**. Noun phrases can help make sentences more complex and detailed. While Step 9 looks at **premodification** (where information in the form of adjectives, participles and other nouns are added before the noun), Step 10 focuses on **postmodification** (where additional information appears after the main noun).

► **Step 11** introduces verbs, and why they are important in English. Since every sentence must contain at least one verb, understanding how they work is critical.

► **Step 12** looks at different ways of dividing verbs. For example, whether they need an **object**, whether they are **main verbs** or **auxiliary** (helping) verbs, whether they are **stative** or **dynamic**, and whether they are **regular** or **irregular**.

► **Steps 13 and 14** examines how to make the 12 verb forms of English, looking in particular at **tense** (when something happens) and **aspect** (how something happens). It also looks at the verb forms which are most commonly used in sentences.

► **Step 15** shows that it is not always necessary to follow the usual Subject-Verb-Object **word order** of English. Verbs can sometimes be put into the **passive voice**, i.e., Object-Verb-(Subject), rather than the **active voice**.

► **Steps 16 and 17** introduces adjectives and adverbs, two major word classes which have an important role to play in sentences. The former adds information to nouns, the latter (usually) provides more information about verbs.

- **Step 18** focuses on **comparative** and **superlative** forms of adjectives and adverbs.
- **Step 19** discusses the position which adjectives and adverbs should go in a sentence. Word order is critically important in sentence construction.
- **Step 20** looks at more complex forms of adjectives, which may be required when writing more complex sentences.
- **Step 21** focuses on conjunctions, looking at the ways in which **clauses** can be linked within sentences, and how sentences can be linked with other sentences.
- **Step 22** gives an overview of how prepositions are used. Prepositions have a very important function in the sentence, in that they show the relationship between content words, such as nouns and verbs. Using prepositions in an unclear way can make it very difficult to understand sentences.
- **Step 23** focused on determiners, a word class which provides key information about nouns.
- **Step 24 and 25** looks in more detail at **articles**, a very commonly used type of determiner.

Feedback on Part B

According to the numbers given in the table in Part B (i.e., 1 = proper noun, etc.), the passage below provides examples of each term.

China¹ has² the³ largest⁴ population of any country in the³ world, at around 1.4 billion. The³ capital city is² Beijing¹, which in⁵ 2008 hosted⁶ the Olympic Games¹. Other large cities include² Shanghai¹ and Chongqing¹. They⁷ both have² a³ population in excess of 10 million. One of the³ things which⁸ China¹ is² most famous⁴ for is² its Great Wall¹. It⁷ is supposed to be the³ only man-made object that⁸ can be seen from space.

Summary

1. You already know more about English sentences than you probably think you do.
2. To be able to write a good sentence, you need to have a good understanding of the different word classes, and how they work together.
3. The normal order of words in English is Subject-Verb-Object.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Answer the following questions. If you are unsure, check the relevant step to find the answer.

- Is the normal word order of English the same as in your mother tongue? If not, what problems might this create?
- What is the usual position for adjectives?
- Where in a sentence do adverbs normally go?
- What do relative pronouns do?

2. Check your understanding.

Fill in the table about the word classes of English with the correct information.

Word Class	Examples	How and why are they are used?
Noun		Refer to people, places or things
Verb		
Adjective		
Adverb		
Pronoun		
Preposition		
Conjunction		
Determiner		

3. Create your own.

The words in the following sentences have been mixed up. Rewrite them in the correct order. Sometimes it may be possible to re-order the words in more than one correct way.

Example: *brown jumped dog a over quick the fox lazy* = *The quick brown fox jumped over a lazy dog.*

a. I to the yesterday shops went.	
b. took book her friend she from the.	
c. which met the they at is museum the café next to.	
d. was Terry flatmate returned working his when.	
e. black ball got its off ran the dog and.	

What are phrases?



'There's nothing I find quite as annoying as the phrase, "I told you so".'

Ayelet Waldman (1964–)
Israeli/American novelist and essayist

A Reflection

Place the words in the box in the correct place in the diagram.

letters whole texts words phrases clauses paragraphs sentences

Letters

make up

make up

make up

make up

Sentences

make up

make up

Look up the following words in a dictionary, and explain in your own words what they mean:

Phrase: _____

Clause: _____

B Contextualization

There are different types of phrases in English. A noun phrase, for example, is a phrase where the main word is a noun (e.g., my friend Sam).

Read the following passage and then write each of the highlighted phrases in the appropriate column of the table.

My friend Sam went to the café because he was hungry. As he was waiting for his food, he saw a well-known celebrity in the corner. The food arrived quite quickly, but Sam kept looking at the woman. Eventually, the celebrity's friend arrived. He had arrived really late and she was very clearly annoyed.

Noun phrase	Verb phrase	Prepositional phrase	Adjective phrase	Adverb phrase
My friend Sam				

C Explanation

What is a phrase?

The diagram on the right shows the hierarchy of written English – that is, the different components and the relationship they have with each other. To make your written English clear, it is important to know how these bits fit together. This step focuses on **phrases**, while ►Step 28 looks at **clauses** and ►Steps 29 and 30 at whole **sentences**.

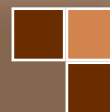
Four key facts about phrases are as follows:

1. **A phrase is a group of words which works as a single unit.** They can be thought of as the ‘building blocks’ of a sentence.
2. **Unlike a clause, you cannot have a phrase ‘by itself’ in a piece of writing.** If you do, it will not make sense. A phrase must be combined with another phrase in order to make sense. However, in speaking or very informal pieces of writing, they may be used.
3. **A phrase consists of two parts – the **head word(s)** and the **dependent words**.** The **head word(s)** are the centre of the phrase – the main idea – whereas the job of the **dependent words** is to add more information.
4. **The number of words in a phrase can vary hugely.** For example, a noun or verb phrase could be just one word (e.g., *I, Angela; leave, eat*), or it could be many words (e.g., *the large green tree which is in the corner of the field*).

Letters
make up
Words
make up
Phrases
make up
Clauses
make up
Sentences
make up
Paragraphs
make up
Whole texts

Top Tip:

Thinking about written English as a series of phrases (rather than as a series of isolated words) can help your reading become quicker and more successful, and your writing clearer and more accurate.



What is a noun phrase?

Noun phrases were looked at in detail in ►Step 9 and ►Step 10, where there was a detailed analysis of the structure of these phrases (including a focus on both **premodification** and **postmodification**).

What is a verb phrase?

The head word in a **verb phrase** is a main **verb**. As in a **noun phrase**, information may come before or after the **main verb** in order to create the whole verb phrase. Consider the main verb *eat* for example. Information which may precede it includes:

- **Auxiliary verbs (including modal verbs):** *I **did** eat it; I **have** eaten some; I **am** eating it; I **may** eat some; I **will** eat some.*
- **Negative words:** *I **never** eat it.*
- **Adverb:** *I **already** ate dinner; I **willingly** ate it.*

In terms of the type of information which can follow the verb, the two most common structures are **objects** and **complements**:

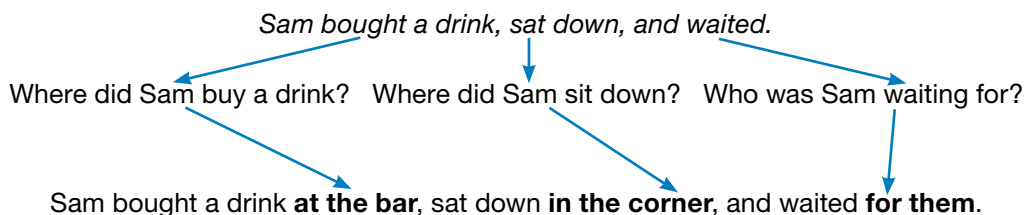
- **Objects:** When the main verb is used **transitively**, a **direct object** is required (e.g., *I never eat **bread***). Depending on the verb used, and the context, an indirect object may also be needed (e.g., *I gave **her** my **bread*** – *bread* is the direct object, *her* is the **indirect object**).
- **Complements:** Some verbs, such as *seem*, *be*, *feel* and *appear* cannot take a direct object, but do require information to follow. There are many different types of **predicative complements** which can follow them, the simplest of which is an adjective (e.g., *happy*, *sad*, *clean*, etc.)

What is a prepositional phrase?

Phrases in which a **preposition** (►Step 22) is the main word of a phrase are very useful in adding useful information to sentences. Such phrases provide more information about the nouns and verbs already there. Three key facts about **prepositional phrases** (PP) are as follows:

- When they add information to nouns, the PP acts like an adjective (e.g., *Who is that person **in the car**?* – gives information about the person).
- When they add information to verbs, the PP acts like an adverb. (e.g., *Could you tell me **in the morning**?* – says how and when the telling should take place).
- PPs never contain the subject of the sentence.

PPs can help turn basic sentences into **complex sentences**. The best way to add this kind of information is to write the basic structure of the sentence, and then ask a series of questions about each part. For example:



What is an adjective phrase?

Adjective phrases have already been looked at in detail in ►Step 22, where the various grammatical constructions which can be used to make adjective phrases are outlined in detail. These include **adverb + adjective** (e.g., *very good*); **adjective + present participle** (e.g., *good-looking*), **adverb + past participle** (e.g., *well-known*) and **adjective + noun** (e.g., *last-minute*).

What is an adverb phrase?

An **adverb phrase** is a group of words where the adverb is the head word. Like an adverb (►Step 17), the grammatical job of an adverb phrase is to modify a verb, adjective or another adverb. Very often a **qualifier** (a word, often an adverb, which increases/decreases the meaning of the adverb) is combined with an adverb to make an adverb phrase. For example:

- **Qualifiers which 'decrease':** *he comes to visit **only occasionally**; the food arrived **quite quickly**; she was **somewhat happy**.*

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Below are some of the phrases from Part B. Write out in detail the grammatical construction of each phrase.

Phrase		Construction
a. <i>My friend Sam</i>	noun phrase	<i>Possessive adjective + countable noun + proper noun</i>
b. <i>He was waiting</i>	verb phrase	
c. <i>for his food</i>	preposition phrase	
d. <i>well-known</i>	adjective phrase	
e. <i>quite quickly</i>	adverb phrase	

2. Check your understanding.

Divide the following sentences into their constituent phrases.

Example: *The old dog was asleep in front of the fire* – [*The old dog*] [*was asleep*] [*in front of the fire*]

- I have been to the USA, but I didn't like it.
- My parents have always supported me and my brother.
- Your birthday present is going to be a holiday in Los Angeles.
- I used to work in a factory next to a river.

3. Create your own.

Write phrases with the same structure as in Exercise 1.

For example:

- My friend Sam* (possessive adjective + countable noun + proper noun) = *Your Dad Dave; Her boss Misha; His girlfriend Nigella*

- He was waiting: _____
- for his food: _____
- well-known: _____
- quite quickly: _____

What are clauses?



'In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has not individuality.'

Karl Marx (1818–1883)

German philosopher, economist, sociologist, historian, journalist and revolutionary socialist

A Reflection

Look at the 12 phrases in the box below. Combine them to make five sentences.

My front door	and I played football	while you were watching television	before leaving home
at the weekend	those are the socks	which I was looking for	even though it was raining
we went to the park	I went to the cinema	I finished writing my essay	I locked

1. We went to the park even though it was raining.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

B Contextualization

Look at the following pairs of clauses. In each case, one represents a complete idea and the other an incomplete idea. Decide which is which.

1. (a) it was raining	<i>complete</i>	(b) because it was raining	<i>incomplete</i>
2. (a) although I was late		(b) I was late	
3. (a) after our meeting		(b) I went back to work	
4. (a) let's go to New York		(b) rather than Paris	
5. (a) which goes very fast		(b) the car is expensive	

What is the difference between the following sentences? Focus in particular on the use of **which** as a relative clause.

- ☐ Let's meet at the café which is next to the river.
- ☐ Yesterday I went to an amazing café, which is next to the river.

What other words do you know which can be used in relative clauses? How, specifically, are they used?

C Explanation

What is a clause?

In the grammatical hierarchy outlined on page XX, a clause comes between a **phrase** and a **sentence**. As such, a useful general definition of a clause is ‘a group of words containing at least a subject and a verb’. There are two main types of clause in English: **independent clauses** (ICs) and **dependent clauses** (DCs). Sometimes these clauses are called **main clauses** and **subordinate clauses**. The table below compares and contrasts the key features of these two types of clause.

Factor	Independent clauses	Dependent clauses
What do they include?	Subject + verb	Dependent marker word + subject + verb
What do they represent?	A complete thought	An incomplete thought
Can they appear on their own?	Make sense by themselves. An IC by itself is a sentence.	Do not make sense by themselves. A DC must be combined with an IC.
Examples	<i>It was raining; I was late.</i>	<i>because it was raining; although I was late</i>

What are dependent marker words?

As noted above, dependent clauses must always begin with a dependent marker word (DMW), such as *because*, *although* or *which*. It is important to understand how this group of words work. Five key facts about them are given below:

1. DMWs indicate that a clause is dependent.
2. DMWs are almost always the first word of the clause.
3. There are two types of DMWs, namely **subordinating conjunctions** (►Step 21) and **relative pronouns** (►Step 7). Information about the former appears in the table below, and about the latter on the following page.
4. When the DMW is a subordinating conjunction, the clause acts like an **adverb**; when the DMW is a relative pronoun, it acts like an **adjective**.
5. DMWs express many different types of relationship, such as:
 - time** (*after, as, as soon as, before, once, since, until, when, while*)
 - manner** (*as, as if, as though, like*)
 - cause and effect** (*although, though, whereas, while, except, that*)
 - reason** (*because, in that, now that, since, so that*)
 - condition** (*if, in case, provided [that], unless*)
 - purpose** (*so that, in order that*)
 - comparison** (*as ... as, more than, less than, than*).

The table below shows some of these DMWs in context.

DMW + clause structure	Example
After (before) + event which comes before (after) the events of the IC	<i>After our meeting, I went back to work. Before leaving home, I locked my front door.</i>
As / So long as + event which must happen before the events of the IC	<i>So long as you sign the contract today, you'll get the 50% discount.</i>
Because + reason or explanation, followed by the result/conclusion in the IC	<i>She was late because her train was delayed.</i>
In order that / So that + purpose / goal, followed by activities which need to occur	<i>So that I pass my English exam, I am going to study hard in the next month.</i>
Now that + event which has just happened	<i>Now that you've arrived, we can eat.</i>
Rather than + less desirable option	<i>Rather than Paris, let's go to New York.</i>
Until / till + event which must happen	<i>I am not leaving the library until I've finished my essay.</i>
When / While + event happening at same time as in IC	<i>While you were watching television, I finished writing my essay.</i>

How can clauses be combined?

There are many different ways in which clauses can be combined to form sentences. The main ways in which this happens in English are outlined in ►Step 29, where sentences are looked at. Generally speaking, there are two main ways of combining an independent and dependent clause. The meaning of the sentences are similar, but the emphasis is different.

- **Independent clause + dependent clause:** *We went to the park even though it was raining.*
- **Dependent clause, independent clause:** *Even though it was raining, we went to the park.*

Dependent clauses represent incomplete ideas, and so cannot exist by themselves in a sentence. They must appear in connection with an independent clause.

What is a relative clause?

A relative clause is a common type of dependent clause. They have already been introduced in ►Step 10. Relative clauses are very useful structures, especially in writing, since they are a quick and easy way of making the writing appear more 'in-depth'. The purpose of a relative clause is to provide information about something or someone who has already been specified. Four key facts about relative clauses are as follows:

1. They have a similar grammatical function to adjectives.
2. They help to avoid repetition.
3. They come after the nouns they are qualifying.
4. They can be 'defining' or 'non-defining'.

Grammar box: Relative pronouns

Words which can be used as relative pronouns are as follows:
that, which, who, whose, whom, what, where, when and why.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the two paragraphs below with the appropriate word from the box.

subject + verb	incomplete	do not make sense
complete	make sense	dependent marker word + subject + verb

An independent clause must consist of at least a _____. They represent a thought or idea which is _____. As such, they _____ by themselves.

A dependent clause must consist of at least a _____. They represent a thought or idea which is _____. As such, they _____ by themselves.

2. Check your understanding.

Are the following clauses independent or dependent? Write *IC* or *DC* next to each of them.

1. which is next to the post office	DC	6. whose author is very well-known	
2. that's got my name on it		7. who was born in 1930	
3. that's the man		8. whom I worked with last year	
4. let's meet in the bookshop	IC	9. this is a book	
5. Buzz Aldrin was the second person on the moon		10. could you pass me the towel	

3. Create your own.

Combine the clauses 1–10 above in order to make good sentences. Ensure you use a comma where it is needed. You may need to rearrange the order of some of the words.

- Let's meet in the bookshop which is next to the post office. (4, 1)
-
-
-
-

What are the main types of sentence in English?



'Look at all the sentences which seem true and question them.'

David Reisman (1909–2002)

American sociologist, educator, commentator and author

A Reflection

What is the purpose of the following sentences in Groups 1–3? In each group, there is an example of sentence type 1, 2, 3 and 4.

1. Making a statement

2. Asking a question

3. Giving orders / instructions

4. Talking about something surprising

Group 1

I went there yesterday. 1

Do you know Sue? _____

Open the window. _____

You're the best! _____

Group 2

I'll help you later. _____

I'm so happy! _____

Please be quiet. _____

Where does she live? _____

Group 3

You must be joking! _____

He likes chocolate. _____

It's her birthday, isn't it? _____

Don't go there. _____

What do you notice about the punctuation for each of the different types of sentences?

B Contextualization

Match the example sentences a–d to the grammatical structures outlined in the box below. Two of the descriptions will not be required.

independent clause	dependent clause	independent clause + dependent clause
independent clause + coordinating conjunction + dependent clause	independent clause + coordinating conjunction + independent clause	independent clause + coordinating conjunction + independent clause + dependent clause

C Explanation

What is a sentence?

A **sentence** is not an easy idea to define. It can be as short as two words (e.g., *I do*) and as long as many thousand words (although this is not advisable!); it may contain just one **clause** (►Step 28) or many different clauses joined together.

Making a sentence is a unique thing. When you create a sentence, it is likely that this will be the first time that anybody has written or spoken that sentence in that particular way. As such, a key question to ask before you create any sentence is:

Why am I making this sentence? What is its purpose?

In short, there are four main reasons for creating a sentence, which are outlined in the table below. The overwhelming majority of sentences in English are **declarative**.

Type of sentence	Purpose / Function	Examples	Punctuation required
Declarative	To share information; to make statements; to relate facts.	<i>I went there yesterday. I'll help you later. He likes chocolate.</i>	A full stop
Interrogative (►Step 35)	To ask questions; to request information; to check information.	<i>Do you know Sue? Where does she live? It's her birthday, isn't it?</i>	A question mark
Imperative	To give orders; to tell somebody what to do (politely or impolitely).	<i>Open the window. Please be quiet. Don't go there.</i>	A full stop or exclamation mark
Exclamative	To talk about interesting, surprising or amazing things.	<i>You're the best! I'm so happy! You must be joking!</i>	An exclamation mark

In addition, there are four main types of sentence, according to their grammatical construction, namely **simple**, **compound**, **complex** and **complex-compound**. Details of these four types are presented below.

What is a simple sentence?

*[She was drinking coffee]*¹.

¹ independent clause

The most basic form of a sentence is called a simple sentence. But just because it is called simple, it does not mean that it is a bad sentence. Some of the most effective sentences in English are simple.

A simple sentence consists of a single **independent clause** (►Step 28). Since a **dependent clause** does not form a complete idea, it cannot be a sentence by itself (►Step 30). As such, this means that the most basic form of a sentence consists of just a **subject** and a **verb**. Therefore, simple sentences tend to be relatively short. This type of sentence is easier to write, and you are less likely to make mistakes.

What is a compound sentence?

[She was drinking coffee]¹ [and]² [he was eating a cake]³.

¹ independent clause; ² coordinating conjunction; ³ independent clause

A compound sentence contains two independent clauses. The word compound means 'together', meaning that compound sentences are a good way of joining together sentences which talk about similar ideas. There are three ways of joining these clauses, namely:

1. Using a **coordinating conjunction** (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*).
2. Using a **semicolon** (►Step 43)
3. Using a **colon** (►Step 43)

In a compound sentence, the two pieces of information are usually of equal importance. They have a 'horizontal' relationship, in contrast to a complex sentence where the independent clause is more important than the dependent clause, meaning the sentences have a 'vertical' relationship.

What is a complex sentence?

[She was drinking coffee]¹ [because she was tired]².

¹ independent clause; ² dependent clause

A complex sentence contains an independent and a dependent clause. Complex sentences can be used to show which idea is the most important in a sentence, and which is of lesser importance. As noted in ►Step 28, a dependent clause must be preceded by a **dependent marker** word (either a **subordinating conjunction** or a **relative pronoun**).

What is a complex–compound sentence?

[She was drinking a coffee]¹ [and]² [he was eating a cake]³ [because they were tired and hungry]⁴.

¹ independent clause; ² coordinating conjunction; ³ independent clause; ⁴ dependent clause

A complex–compound sentence is a mixture of the two previous sentence types. As such, it consists of at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. These sentences can be very effective, but also quite difficult to write.

Summary of the clauses used in the four sentence types

Type of sentence	Independent clause	Dependent clause
Simple	Yes (1)	No
Compound	Yes (2+)	No
Complex	Yes (1)	Yes (1)
Complex–compound	Yes (1+)	Yes (1+)

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the table with the information in the box below.

Yes (1) x 3			Yes (1+) x 2			Yes (2+) x 1			No x 2		
Type of sentence			Independent clause			Dependent clause					
Simple											
Compound											
Complex											
Complex–compound											

2. Check your understanding.

Read the following passage. In each case, write the sentence numbers in the box according to their type.

Esperanto is an artificial language, which can be defined as a language created by humans¹. It was invented by L. L. Zamenhof in 1887². Its primary aim was to create an easy-to-learn language, which was also politically neutral, so as to lead ultimately to world peace³. The word 'Esperanto' means 'one who hopes'⁴. Over history, many other artificial languages have been invented, but none have had as much influence as Esperanto⁵. Although it has no native speakers, more than 100,000 people speak it around the world and there are nearly 200,000 Esperanto articles on Wikipedia⁶.

Simple					
Compound					
Complex					
Complex–compound					

3. Create your own.

Using the clauses in the box below, create four sentences in the table which follows. You will need to add the appropriate punctuation.

although my children prefer playing sport	the students are studying	they wanted to play basketball instead	I suggested we go to the cinema
the train was delayed	because they have an exam	I went to the park with my dog	so I was late for my meeting
Simple:			
Compound:			
Complex:			
Complex–compound:			

How can I write better sentences and avoid mistakes?



'Sentence first, verdict afterwards.'

Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

English writer, mathematician, logician and photographer

A Reflection

Which of the following statements are true?

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> It is important to think about why you are writing a sentence. | True / False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sentences should be as long as possible. | True / False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixing the style and length of your sentences is a good strategy. | True / False |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grammatical accuracy is the most important thing when writing a sentence. | True / False |

B Contextualization

What is the problem with each of the following texts? Match them with the comments which follow.

a. She has two children the girl is 15 and the boy is 12.

b. I went to Barcelona in 2013. Madrid is far less pretty than Barcelona, which is a beautiful city.

c. I live in Doha. I have one sister. She is 11 years-old.

d. Many of my classmates are worried about their English exam, and their Maths exam, because they found the course difficult, and as such they are staying up late to revise but I don't think this is a good idea.

e. Michael told Nigel that he was going to be late.

f. There are three things you need to remember: set your alarm, bring the tickets and don't be arriving late.

g. When he arrived home.

h. Having finished her essay, the television was turned on.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The sentence is too long. | 5. The information in the sentence comes in the wrong order. |
| 2. Too many short sentences are next to each other. | 6. It is not clear what the pronoun refers to. |
| 3. The sentence is incomplete. | 7. The sentence does not have the same internal structure. |
| 4. One sentence runs into another sentence. | 8. The sentence's use of modifiers is unclear. |

C Explanation

What types of sentences should I use?

The short and easy answer to this is: whatever is appropriate in the circumstances. It is often said that a good **sentence** is a long sentence. However, **this is not true**. Your sentences should be as long as they need to be. When writing sentences, remember this piece of advice:

■ *A short and accurate sentence is better than a long and inaccurate sentence.*

Four general points about writing sentences in English are as follows. If you can follow all of these points, then your writing will be much clearer and more accurate.

1. Before you write a sentence, it is important to think **why** you are writing it. What is the purpose? What are you trying to achieve? What do you want the reader to feel after they have read it? (►Step 29)
2. If you think a sentence is too long, then everybody else will too.
3. Using a mixture of different types and lengths of sentences will make your text more readable.
4. Just because your sentence is grammatically correct does not mean that it makes sense. American linguist Noam Chomsky used the sentence 'colourless green ideas sleep furiously' to emphasize this point. It is 'correct', but it makes no sense at all.

What common mistakes are made with sentences?

The list below identifies seven common problems made when writing sentences and refer to the sentences from Part B. As you read the list, consider which of these problems affect you.

1. The sentence is too long (**sentence d**).

Rewrite: Many of my classmates are worried about their English and Maths exams because they found the course difficult. As such, they are staying up late to revise, but I don't think this is a good idea.

As noted above, a long sentence is not necessarily a good sentence. One particular problem, as in this example, is when too many **clauses** are used. When this occurs, it can become difficult to know how the clauses relate to each other – i.e., which 'bit' belongs to which other 'bit'.

2. Too many short sentences are next to each other (**sentence c**).

Rewrite: I live in Doha and have one sister, who is 11 years-old.

Whilst short sentences can be used, and can help your writing be clear and focused, you should not only use short sentences. If you do, your writing may sound as if it is 'out of breath' – like a list of bullet points which are not really connected together. Where two sentences next to each other are of equal importance, you might be able to join them using a **coordinating conjunction**; where one sentence is more important than the other, you can use a **subordinating conjunction**.

3. The sentence is incomplete (**sentence g**).

Rewrite: We ate dinner when he arrived home.

As noted in ►Steps 28 and 29, the essential minimum which every sentence must have is a **subject** and a **verb**. If either one of these is missing, the sentence is not complete. In addition, if your sentence includes a **dependent marker word** (►Step 28), there must be at least two clauses in the sentence. Ask yourself: *Is the thought complete?*

4. One sentence runs into another sentence (sentence a).

Rewrite: She has two children. The girl is 15 and the boy is 12.

You must ensure that sentences are clearly separated by placing a **full stop** (or other **punctuation** ►Steps 41 and 43) between them. An alternative solution is to join the sentences using a coordinating or subordinating conjunction.

5. The information in the sentence comes in the wrong order (sentence b).

Rewrite: I went to Barcelona in 2013. It is a beautiful city, far prettier than Madrid.

In English, the usual order in which information comes is 'familiar' or 'known' followed by 'new' or 'unknown'. Information doesn't **always** have to follow this order, but most of the time it does. In the example, *Barcelona* is introduced in the first sentence, and so it makes logical sense to carry on talking about this point, before moving on to the new subject (i.e., *Madrid*).

6. It is not clear what the pronoun refers to (sentence e).

Rewrite 1: Michael was going to be late. He told Nigel.

Rewrite 2: Michael knew Nigel was going to be late, so he told him.

Pronouns help you avoid repetition in a text, improving the quality of your writing (►Step 7). However, you need to make sure that it is clear what each pronoun refers to. In the example sentence, it is not clear who he refers to: it could be either Michael or Nigel who is going to be late. The rewritten version makes this clear. This can be a particular problem in long sentences, where there are many words between the pronoun and the word it replaces.

7. The sentence does not have the same internal structure (sentence f).

Rewrite: There are three things you need to remember: set your alarm, bring the tickets and ensure you are not late.

Sentences sound better when they have parallel structures. The example in Part B, for example, has two identical verb forms (*set* and *bring* are both in the 'positive' **present simple**) and one is in the 'negative' **present continuous** (*don't be arriving*). Whilst the grammar here is accurate, the **style** is poor. The rewritten version puts each verb form in the same format, which improves the flow of the sentence.

8. The sentence's use of modifiers is unclear (sentence h).

Rewrite: Having finished her essay, she turned the television on.

In the example, the introductory **modifier** (*having finished her essay*), has no clear connection to the rest of the sentence. The 'doer' of the sentence must be the sentence of the main clause. The rewritten version makes this clear.

Summary

1. A long sentence is not necessarily a good sentence. A short and accurate sentence is better than a long and inaccurate sentence.
2. Be aware of common sentence problems in English, and identify strategies for avoiding them.
3. Just because your sentence is grammatically correct does not mean that it makes sense.

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

In your own words, write the solution(s) to each of the sentence problems identified in Part C.

Problem	Solution
1	Write a shorter sentence. Check whether I can understand the sentence. Ask how many clauses there are. Break the overlong sentence into shorter, more manageable sentences.
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

2. Check your understanding.

Four of the following sentences are incorrect. Decide which ones they are, and write the number of the problem identified on pages **XX-YY**.

Sentence	Correct?	Incorrect?
a. Whereas my mother likes playing tennis.		
b. Bill Clinton used to be President of the USA. He was one of the most powerful people in the world.		
c. I went to the beach, the hotel and the gym we then went to the restaurant for dinner.		
d. She works in an office in the city, mainly dealing with customers.		
e. Having taken his dog for a walk, he fell asleep.		
f. In the exam, students should be silent, stay until the end, and put their hand up if they have a question.		

What grammar should I use to show possibility and probability?



'If nature has taught us anything it is that the impossible is probable.'

Ilyas Kassam (1986 –)
British writer, philosopher and chef

A Reflection

Look at the words in the box below and then answer the questions which follow.

can	Certain	possibly	potential	likely	Could	perhaps
might		couldn't	probably	may	may	can't

Which of these words are modal verbs?	
Which of these words are adjectives?	
Which of these words are adverbs?	
Which of these words have a meaning similar to '75%+'?	
Which of these words have a meaning similar to 'around 50%'?	

B Contextualization

The 'condition' and 'result' clauses in these conditional sentences have been divided up. Match each condition clause to the correct result clause. One example has been done for you.

Condition clause

1. If you heat water,
2. If you want any more advice,
3. If I won the lottery,
4. If she'd been there,
5. If she'd caught her train,
6. If your English were better,

Result clause

- a. I would go on holiday.
- b. it would never have happened.
- c. I'll give you some.
- d. you would have got a better job by now.
- e. it boils.
- f. she would be here now.

What is the grammatical structure of each of these sentences?

Sentence parts	Condition clause structure	Result clause structure
1 – e	If + present simple	present simple
2 –		
3 –		

C Explanation

How can 'conditionals' be used to talk about possibility and probability?

Conditional sentences are one of the main ways in English to show the possibility, probability and chance of something happening. Conditional sentences have two specific halves – the condition clause (CC) and the result clause (RC). The CC is an **independent clause** (►Step 28), usually containing a **main verb** with *will* or *would*, while the RC is a **dependent clause** and includes *if*, which is a **dependent marker** word. Some of the most commonly used conditional structures in English are outlined in the table below. These structures are a very good starting point for talking about conditions.

Name	Use/Function	Form	Example	Notes
Zero	If the condition exists, the result will always follow. <i>If</i> has a similar meaning to <i>when</i> .	CC: <i>If</i> + present simple RC: present simple	<i>If you heat water, it boils.</i>	Used for general truths and facts
1 st	If the condition exists, the result is very likely.	CC: <i>If</i> + present simple RC: future simple	<i>If you want any more advice, I'll give you some.</i>	Future events which are likely to happen
2 nd	The condition is not real (i.e., it is imagined). The sentence talks about a possibility.	CC: <i>If</i> + past simple RC: <i>would</i> + infinitive	<i>If I won the lottery, I would go on holiday.</i>	Used for advice and in hypothetical situations
3 rd	The sentence talks about an impossible situation – the condition is in the past, and so cannot be changed.	CC: <i>If</i> + past perfect RC: <i>would</i> have + past participle	<i>If she'd been there, it would never have happened.</i>	Used for regret
Mixed type 1	The sentence contrasts a past event (either real or unreal) with the present result of this event. It mixes the 3 rd conditional (CC) with a 2 nd conditional (RC).	CC: <i>If</i> + past perfect RC: <i>would</i> + infinitive	<i>If she'd caught her train, she would be here now.</i>	Used for regret
Mixed type 2	The present situation is related to a past event. It mixes the 2 nd conditional (CC) with a 3 rd conditional (RC).	CC: <i>If</i> + past simple RC: <i>would</i> have + past participle	<i>If your English were better, you would have got a better job by now.</i>	Not very commonly used

Three key facts about conditional sentences:

1. The order of the clauses can normally be reversed – e.g., for the 2nd conditional above, you could say *I would go on holiday if I won the lottery*. In some circumstances, **punctuation** (especially **commas**) may have to change.
2. Other **conjunctions** which may introduce conditional sentences are *unless* (= 'if not'), *provided/providing that* (= 'only if'), *so long as/as long as* and *on condition that*.
3. In the 2nd conditional, where the condition clause uses the verb *to be*, *were* rather than *was* is often used for the 1st and 3rd person. E.g., *If I were you, I'd go to school*.

How can adjectives/adverbs be used to talk about possibility and probability?

Using **adjectives** in connection with **nouns**, or adverbs in connection with **verbs**, is a relatively easy way to indicate possibility or probability. Notice the differences between the following sentences:

- *I'll be home by 10 / I'll probably be home by 10 / I'll possibly be home by 10.*

Other adjectives which are commonly used include *likely*, *possible*, *potential* and *probable*; other adverbs include *maybe* and *perhaps*, both of which usually come at the beginning of the sentence. Note that you can also use stronger adjectives or adverbs (e.g., *certain/certainly* if you are sure of something (►Step 39).

How can modal verbs be used to talk about possibility and probability?

As outlined in ►Step 12, **modal verbs** are a type of **auxiliary verb**. Many modal verbs can be used with the **infinitive** of a verb to talk about possibility, probability and impossibility, as detailed below.

Modal verbs describing probability

- **Can** is used to make general statements about what is possible – e.g., *You **can** smoke in the next room; She **can** speak French and Spanish.* It may often be followed by the **passive voice** – e.g., *Many things **can** now be bought online.*
- **Could** is the past form of *can* / *can't*, and is often used to talk about a general ability – e.g., *When I was a child, I could do what I wanted; My Dad **couldn't** swim until he was 45 years-old!*
- **Must** is used when we are certain something is true, and we have evidence for this – e.g., *You've been running. You **must** be thirsty. **Must** have* can be used in a similar way for the past – e.g., *He **must have** known about that.*
- **Should** is used to talk about things which we assume, or have good reason to think, are true. *Should* is not quite as strong as *must* – e.g., *They **shouldn't** be back so soon, **should** they?*

Grammar box: (be) able to

(be) able to has a similar meaning to can, but is less commonly used. However, it can be extremely useful in situations where it is not possible to use *can*, e.g., with the present perfect:
I haven't been able to go recently.

Modal verbs describing possibility

- **Could**, **may** and **might** are used to say that something is a possibility in the future, but there is no certainty. They have a very similar meaning – e.g., *It **may** rain tomorrow; She **might** be late.* These modal verbs can also be used with the present perfect to show that something was possible in the past, or that it may be true now – e.g., *Their train left on time. They **might have** arrived already; She **could have** married someone more interesting.*

Modal verbs describing impossibility

- **Can't** is used to describe impossible events in the present – e.g., *That **can't** be true! She **can't** be here already!*
- **Couldn't** performs the same role in the past – e.g., *He **couldn't** finish his essay on time.* It can also help form the present perfect – e.g., *They **couldn't** have done any more.*

D**Activation****1. Complete and comprehend.****Match the following sentences to their purpose.**

- a. If I were you, I wouldn't tell him until tomorrow.
- b. If she'd told us, we could have helped sooner.
- c. If the weather's nice, we'll go to the park later.
- d. If I agree, we should do it quickly.

Fact
Probability
Regret
Advice

2. Check your understanding.**Complete the following sentences with an appropriate modal verb.**

- a. His favourite actor _____ be Tom Cruise. You've got all his DVDs.
- b. I've finished! I _____ finally submit my essay.
- c. Before she arrived in London, she _____ speak a word of English.
- d. The boss _____ agree with you, but I doubt it.
- e. Emma and Nigel went to the zoo yesterday. They _____ seen some lions.

3. Create your own.**(i) Complete the sentences about yourself, using an appropriate form of the conditional.**

- a. If I exercised more, _____
- b. If I didn't go to work tomorrow, _____
- c. If I'd been born in the UK, _____
- d. If I go to bed late tonight, _____

(ii) Now write three more sentences about your own life using some of the phrases in the box below.

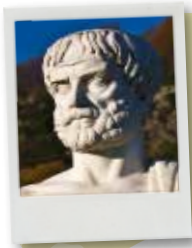
unless on condition that provided that providing that as long as so long as

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

How can I use phrasal verbs correctly?



'The whole is more than the sum of its parts.'

Aristotle (384–322 BC)
Greek philosopher and scientist

A Reflection

Some examples of phrasal verbs are as follows: *carry out; drop in; get by; give out; find out*. Decide whether the following statements about phrasal verbs are true or false.

Statement	True	False
Phrasal verbs are composed of more than one part.		
It is usually possible to guess the meaning of a phrasal verb.		
Phrasal verbs are not very common in English.		
Phrasal verbs are always transitive.		
Phrasal verbs can only have one meaning.		

What other phrasal verbs do you know? Take a minute to write as many as you can.

B Contextualization

Look at the list of one-word verbs in the box below. Write these verbs next to their 'phrasal' (multi-word) equivalent underneath.

admire survive complete discover visit succeed distribute examine

Carry out:	<u>complete</u>	Get by:	_____
Drop in:	_____	Give out:	_____
Look up to:	_____	Find out:	_____
Get ahead:	_____	Check up on:	_____

In what situations could you use phrasal verbs?

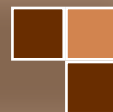
C Explanation

What are ten facts about phrasal verbs?

1. A phrasal verb is a type of multi-part verb because it is composed of two different parts – a **verb** and a **particle**. This particle is either a **preposition** (►Step 22) or an **adverb** (►Step 17).
2. Phrasal verbs are **very** common in spoken English and informal writing. However, they are not commonly used in more **formal** types of speaking or writing. In such formal situations, it is better to use a one-word equivalent verb (e.g., *admire* instead of *look up to*).
3. The **main verbs** used in phrasal verbs are generally common verbs, e.g., *break, come, look, make, take*, etc. These verbs can be combined with many different prepositions or adverbs (e.g., *look + at/in/into/over*).
4. The meaning of a phrasal verb can sometimes be guessed from its parts. On other occasions this may not be possible, and the phrasal verb has to be learnt separately.
5. Like one-word verbs, some phrasal verbs can have more than one meaning. For example, *blow up* (= *to inflate*, e.g., a balloon, or *to destroy*, e.g., a building). Phrasal verbs may have both a literal and a figurative meaning.
6. The majority of phrasal verbs consist of two parts, but some may also have three components (e.g., *look up to; get along with*).
7. Phrasal verbs can be **transitive** or **intransitive**. Transitive phrasal verbs must have an **object**, whereas intransitive phrasal verbs cannot have an object. An example of a transitive phrasal verb is *fill out* (e.g., *I filled out the form*); an example of an intransitive verb is *break down* (e.g., *my car broke down*). Note that intransitive verbs may, however, take an **indirect object**.
8. Some phrasal verbs are separable. This means that the object comes between the verb and its particle (e.g., *She wrote his address down*). With separable phrasal verbs, the object may also come after the phrasal verb, meaning that in the example given, it would also be possible to say, *She wrote down his address*. Such phrasal verbs follow the model: Subject + first part of phrasal verb + object + second part of phrasal verb.
Note that all separable phrasal verbs are also transitive, and that when the object is a pronoun, it must be placed between the verb and the particle.
9. Inseparable phrasal verbs, on the other hand, have to be followed by their object. For example, we must say, *She looked after her niece* (not, *She looked her niece after*). Inseparable phrasal verbs can also be transitive or intransitive.

Top Tip:

Check a dictionary to understand more about a phrasal verb (i.e., about whether it is (in)transitive or (in)separable).



10. Some phrasal verbs can be turned into so-called phrasal nouns, e.g., *The television is on standby; Technical backup can be provided if necessary*. The preposition may go before or after the main verb. Other common phrasal nouns include *breakaway, changeover, input, onset, payback, payoff, playback, put-down, setback* and *take-off*.

What are some of the most commonly used phrasal verbs in English?

Below are a series of **sentences** which show several common English phrasal verbs in context. The definition of each phrasal verb appears underneath each sentence.

Separable phrasal verbs

- What **brought** these feelings **about**?
(bring about = cause to happen)
- You need to **calm** him **down** before he leaves.
(calm down = become calm, feel less stressed)
- Have the government **carried** their policies **out** yet?
(carry out = complete, perform, accomplish)
- Who **found** the answer **out**?
(find out = discover)
- I'm going to **give** these pens **out** to the whole class.
(give out = distribute)

Grammar box: Other separable phrasal verbs

blow up; bring up; call off; fill out; fill up; give away; give back; hand in; hang up; hold up; leave out; look over; look up; make out; make up; pick out; pick up; point out; put away; put off; put on; put out; set up; take down; take off; take over; talk over; throw away; try out; turn down; turn up; turn off

Inseparable phrasal verbs

Transitive

- Can you **check up on** her when you get home?
(check up on = examine, verify)
- I'd like to **do without** sweets, but I'm not sure I could.
(do without = to manage without something)
- Did they find him or did he **get away with** it?
(get away with = do something bad without getting caught)
- Which famous people do you **look up to**?
(look up to = admire)
- When you borrow my car, **take care of** it.
(take care of = protect)

Grammar box: Other transitive inseparable phrasal verbs

back out of; call for; call on; care for; come by; fall back on; get around; get over; go over; go through; hear of; live up to; look after; look down on; look into; make up for; put up with; run across; run into; see about; see to; stick to; take after; talk over; turn into; wait on; wait up for

Intransitive

- Don't do anything else until the problem **blows over**.
(blow over = becoming less important until it is forgotten)
- She has really **fallen behind** in her classes.
(fall behind = to fail to do something quickly enough or on time)
- Drop in** any time. It would be great to see you.
(drop in = to visit someone without notice)
- He is very ambitious to **get ahead** in the company.
(get ahead = to be successful in the work you do)
- My daughter had to **run away** from that scary dog.
(run away = go quickly in opposite direction)

Grammar box: Other intransitive inseparable phrasal verbs

back down; catch on; clear out; come back; come in; come to; eat out; get by; get off; get up; go back; go on; grow up; keep away; lie down; look on; pass out; show off; show up; slow up; stand by; stay over; take off; wake up; walk back; wash out; watch out; wear out

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Fill in the following gaps with appropriate words. At first, try to do this without referring back to the text.

- a. A phrasal verb is composed of a verb followed by either a _____ or _____.
- b. Phrasal verbs are _____ in spoken English and informal writing, but _____ common in academic speaking and writing.
- c. Phrasal verbs can have _____ one meaning.
- d. Phrasal verbs may be transitive, meaning they must be followed by an _____, or intransitive, meaning they do not. If the verb is _____, the object can come after the whole phrasal verb, or else between the components.
- e. When the phrasal verb is inseparable, the object must _____ the preposition/ adverb part.

2. Check your understanding.

Rewrite the following sentences using an appropriate phrasal verb.

Example: *If you ever come to London, please visit.*

If you ever come to London, please drop in.

- a. The case caused a change in the law.

- b. She managed without any help from her parents.

- c. The doctors performed the operation last night.

- d. He really admired his elder sister.

3. Create your own.

Choose five phrasal verbs from one of the Grammar boxes on page XX. Look them up in a dictionary and then write five sentences to show their meaning.

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

- e. _____

What grammar should I use to show relationships in time?



'Lost time is never found again.'

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

American author, political theorist, scientist, inventor, statesman, and one of the Founding Fathers of the United States

A Reflection

Look at the adverbs in the box below. Write them in the correct column of the table according to whether they refer to *when* something happens, how *long* it happens for or how *often* it happens.

today	later	seldom	always	not long	tomorrow
all day	never	yesterday	for a while	now	monthly
yearly	sometimes	often	since	last week	regularly

When	How long	How often
today	for a while	monthly

B Contextualization

Complete the gaps in the sentences below with an appropriate timeword from the box.

before	After	since	on	at	for	in	when	as soon as	ago
--------	-------	-------	----	----	-----	----	------	------------	-----

- ☐ She's going to university **in** September.
- ☐ Did you arrive _____ or _____ Emily?
- ☐ You can open your presents _____ 9 o'clock _____ your birthday.
- ☐ She's been teaching _____ 10 o'clock – _____ nearly two hours!
- ☐ I was writing my essay _____ my computer crashed.
- ☐ We'll leave _____ your father gets home.

Which of the four verb forms are used to talk about the following? If you are unsure, refer back to Step 14 where this was discussed in detail.

present simple	present continuous	present perfect	past simple
----------------	--------------------	-----------------	-------------

C Explanation

What are the five main ways to talk about time in English?

Of course, there are many different ways to talk about time in English. This step identifies five of the simplest and most-effective ways of doing so. Combining several of these strategies together can help you write about time in an even more interesting and intelligent way.

1. Using verbs

Verbs are the main word class which talks about relationship in time. ►Steps 13 and 14, in particular, explain in detail which verb forms should be used in which situation. Two key areas to remember are **tense** (**when** something happens) and **aspect** (**how** something happens). Three of the main verb forms used in English, and their common uses, are outlined below:

- **Present simple:** (e.g., *I go to school every day; English is difficult*) to state general truths or facts; to make generalizations; to describe repeated actions; to indicate a future action or event which is planned or timetabled.
- **Present continuous:** (e.g., *She's reading a book; We're leaving tonight*) to show action is unfinished at this moment; to be in the middle of doing something; to discuss things that are true around now (i.e., which have begun but not finished); to show a future action / event which will probably occur in the near future.
- **Past simple:** (e.g., *They returned home late last night; As a child she lived in Berlin*) to show that a single action started and finished at a specific point in the past; to show something happened in the past for a period of time; to show past habits, truths or facts.
- **Present perfect:** (e.g., *We've been talking for ages; They're been here before*) to show an event(s) took place in the past but not at a specific time; to talk about changes over a period of time; to show that actions / events which began in the past have continued until the present.

2. Using adverbs

Adverbs of time can give provide more information about time relationships in three specific areas:

- **When** an action happened (or is going to happen): e.g., *today, yesterday, tomorrow, later, now, last week/month/year*.
- **How long** an action happened for: e.g., *all day/week/month/year; not long; for a while; since yesterday*.
- **How often** something happened: *never, seldom, sometimes, often, always, monthly, yearly*. This group can be divided into **adverbs** of definite frequency (e.g., *annually, daily, fortnightly, hourly, nightly, quarterly, weekly*) and adverbs of indefinite frequency (e.g., *constantly, ever, frequently, generally, infrequently, normally, occasionally, rarely, regularly, usually*).

Grammar box:

Auxiliary verb *used to*

The auxiliary verb ***used to*** is used in order to say that something regularly happened in the past but no longer happens.

For example:

- *I **used to** play football when I was younger. Now I'm too old.*
- *He **used to** smoke 20 cigarettes a day, but he quit last year.*

'Used to' is followed by the verb in the bare infinitive.

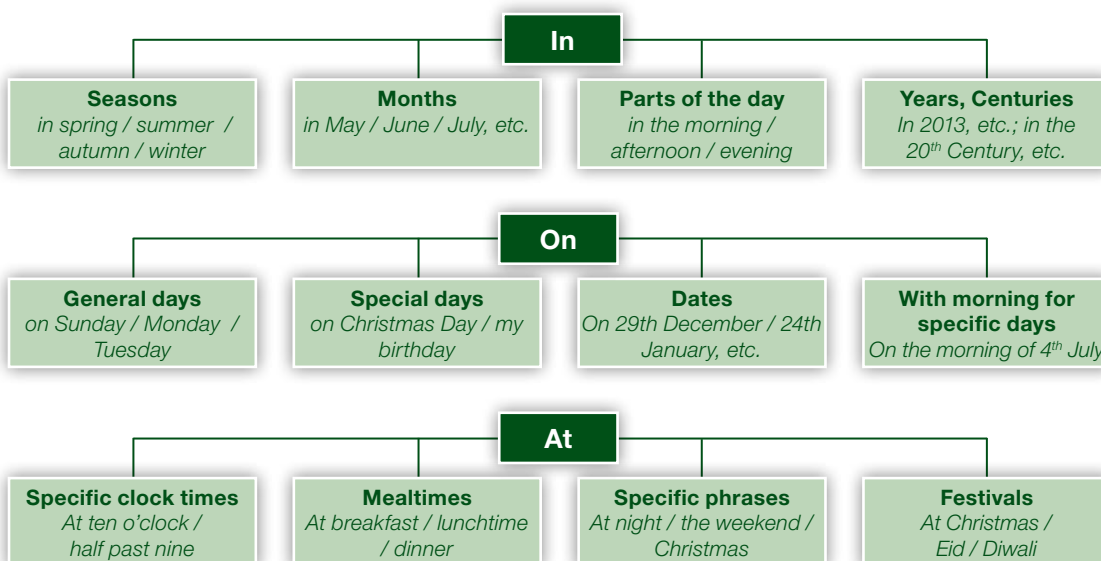
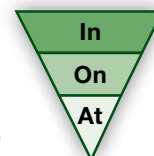
3. Using subordinating conjunctions

As ►Step 28 explains, many **subordinating conjunctions** can be used to talk about time. There are three major types of relationship which they can describe, namely:

- **To show that events occurred at different times:** e.g., *after* / *before*.
 - *Did you arrive before or after Emily?*
- **To show two things occurred at the same time:** e.g., *while* / *when*.
 - *I was writing my essay when my computer crashed.*
- **To show that for one event to occur, another event has to happen first:** e.g., *as soon as* / *once* / *until*.
 - *We'll leave as soon as your father gets home.*

4. Using prepositions

As noted in ►Step 22, there are a number of prepositions used in English which are related to time. *In*, *on* and *at* are three such prepositions. *In* refers to more general periods of time, whilst *at* is more specific. *On* is somewhere in between. In terms of their specific use, these prepositions are used as follows:



5. Using *since* and *for*

Since and *for* are commonly used – and commonly confused – prepositions. They are generally used with the **present perfect** and **present perfect continuous** verb forms. *Since* is used to talk about what has happened from a point in time, whereas *for* relates to a duration of time. For example, we could say either *She's been teaching since 10 o'clock* or *She's been teaching for nearly two hours*. Therefore, *since* must be followed by **dates** (e.g., 1989; 24th May; last Tuesday) or **events** (the end of the Second World War; the General Election). *For* must be followed by **lengths of time** (e.g., three seconds; seven hours; 41 days; millions of years).

Summary

1. Verbs are the most common way to talk about relationships in time. Focus on being able to correctly use the four main verb forms (present simple, continuous, perfect and past simple).
2. Adverbs of time can help you say when something happens, how long it happens for, and how often it happens.
3. Five common time prepositions are *in*, *on*, *at*, *since* and *for*.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

(i) Write as many of the uses of these four verb forms as you can remember.

Present simple	Present continuous
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
Past simple	Present perfect
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

(ii) Which of the verb forms above do you think these adverbs are most likely to go with? Sometimes more than one form may be the answer.

Example: yesterday – **past simple**

- Since yesterday: _____
- Never: _____
- Later: _____
- Daily: _____

2. Check your understanding.

Use an appropriate subordinating conjunction to link these sentences.

Example: I saw my friend **while** I was waiting for a bus.

- I'll call you back _____ my lesson.
- We'll let you know if you got the job _____ we have interviewed everyone.
- _____ I know my final marks, I don't know where I'm going to College.
- _____ she was a fashion designer, Victoria Beckham was a pop star.

3. Create your own.

Complete the following sentences with an appropriate time phrase.

Example: I last went to the cinema on **Monday / my birthday / 13th June**.

- She's been working on that computer since _____.
- They finally arrived at _____.
- At _____, we'll be staying with my friends Tim and Tom.
- My parents have lived in their house for _____. They moved there in _____, I think.
- We _____ go on holiday there all the time, but it became too expensive.

What grammar should I use to talk about negatives?



'What, if two negatives make an affirmative ... does it follow that two nobodies shall be somebody?'

Samuel Laman Blanchard (1804–1845)
English poet, essayist and journalist

A Reflection

Read the following passage and identify any negative words you can find. There are 12 in total. One example has been done for you.

I have been teaching for 25 years, and I have never seen such a difficult exam. There was no way this was reasonable. In fact, I would say it was unfair. Nothing – or hardly anything – of what we studied was in the exam. In terms of the results, neither the weakest nor the strongest students did well. Barely any of them got more than 50%. None of them got more than 60%. They just could not understand the questions! In my opinion, nobody benefits from such a difficult exam. As such, I disagree with the approach of the examiners. Their questions seemed to come from nowhere.

B Contextualization

Using the list of negative words you found above, write them next to their definition in the table below.

An adverb meaning 'not at any time'.	never	A pronoun meaning 'not anything'.	
A pronoun meaning 'not any'.		A two-word combination meaning 'not either of two things / people'.	
A determiner meaning 'not any'.		Two adverbs meaning 'almost not'.	
An adverb used in a verb phrase to form the negative.		An adjective and a verb with a negative prefix.	
A pronoun meaning 'no person at all'.		A pronoun or adverb meaning 'no place'.	

There are several **prefixes** which indicate a negative word. The table below contains six such prefixes. Write down any negative words you know beginning with these prefixes. Two examples have been provided for you.

C Explanation

What is the purpose of negative words in English?

There are many reasons to use **negative** words in English, primarily:

- to show a negative meaning;
- to say something is not true, did not happen or does not exist;
- to give a negative response to a question; and
- to present a negative attitude towards something.

What are the main negative words in English?

The main negative words in English are: *no, not, none, no one, nobody, nothing, neither, nowhere* and *never*. In general, these words tend to function as either **determiners** (Step►23), **pronouns** (Step ►7) or **adverbs** (Step ►17). The table below gives definitions of these words and identifies the **main** way in which they are used in English. An example sentence which shows how the word is used is also given. Specific notes relating to these words appear beneath the table.

Word	Definition / Usage	Example
No	A determiner meaning 'not any'.	There was no way this was reasonable.
Not ^{1, 2}	An adverb used in a verb phrase to form the negative.	They just could not understand the questions!
None	A pronoun meaning 'not any' or 'not one'.	None of them got more than 60%.
Never	An adverb meaning 'not at any time'.	... I have never seen such a difficult exam.
Nobody / No one ³	A pronoun meaning 'no person at all'.	... nobody benefits from such a difficult exam.
Nothing	A pronoun meaning 'not anything'.	Nothing ... of what we studied was in the exam.
Neither ⁴	A determiner, pronoun or adverb meaning 'not either of two things / people'.	... neither the weakest nor the strongest students did well.
Nowhere	A pronoun or adverb meaning 'no place'.	Their questions seemed to come from nowhere.

Notes

¹ Not can be used in conjunction with an **auxiliary verb**. It appears after the first auxiliary verb in the **verb phrase**. For example: *She is not coming later; They may not arrive on time; You have not been listening properly; My brother might not be going*. In spoken English and less formal written English, *not* is often combined with the auxiliary verb in a contracted form. This results in forms such as:

Be as an auxiliary: *isn't, aren't, wasn't, weren't, won't* (**note**: not *amn't*).

Have as an auxiliary: *hasn't, haven't, hadn't*.

Do as an auxiliary: *don't, doesn't, didn't*.

Modal auxiliaries: *can't, couldn't, mustn't, shouldn't, wouldn't*.

² When there is no auxiliary verb (e.g., the present simple and past simple), use the appropriate form of *do* (i.e., *do/does/did*) plus the **bare infinitive**. For example:

They do not like cricket.

She does not eat fish.

We didn't go to the cinema.

Top Tip

Sometimes native speakers may use two negatives in the same sentence – for example, *I don't want nothing*. The effect of this is to make a positive (= I want something). Such a structure is more common in spoken or informal English.

In this form of English, you might also find two negatives in the same clause. When this happens, the second negative intensifies the negativity of the whole sentence. *I don't want nothing* would therefore mean *I really don't want anything*.

What negative adverbs can I use?

There are several negative adverbs (e.g., *hardly*, *scarcely*, *barely*) meaning 'almost not' which can be used in English. When using these adverbs, it is important to note that you should **not** use a negative form with them. As a general rule, use any where you think you should use *no*. *Ever* can also be used, meaning 'at any time'.

For example:

- ☐ He had *barely* **no** *any* sleep last night.
- ☐ Since her accident, she *hardly* goes **nowhere** *anywhere*.
- ☐ I *scarcely* **never** *ever* go.

As noted in ►Step 33, two common time adverbs which show that something doesn't happen very much are *seldom* and *rarely*.

What negative prefixes are there?

Knowing how to use negative **prefixes** can make your writing easier to follow and less complicated. For example, the following sentences are both acceptable (although there is a slight difference in emphasis):

- ☐ I do not agree with the approach of the examiners.
- ☐ I disagree with the approach of the examiners.
- ☐ In fact, I would say it was not fair.
- ☐ In fact, I would say it was unfair.

Some of the most commonly used negative prefixes are *dis~*, *il~*, *im~*, *in~*, *ir~* and *un~*. Three common words for each are given below.

Dis~	Il~	Im~	In~	Ir~	Un~
disappear	illegal	immoral	inaccurate	irregular	unhappy
disadvantage	illogical	imperfect	inappropriate	irresponsible	unclear
dishonest	illegible	impossible	inadequate	irrelevant	undo

Other prefixes which may indicate a negative meaning include *a/an~* (e.g., *amoral*), *anti~* (*antisocial*), *contra~* (*contradiction*), *counter~* (*counter-argument*), *de~* (*decentralize*), *mis~* (*misuse*), *non~* (*nonsense*) and the suffix *~less* (*useless*).

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

(i) Answer the following questions in your own words.

- What are the main reasons for using negatives in English?
- How do you use the word *not* with a verb phrase?
- What is a double negative? Should you use them in English?
- What five negative adverbs are mentioned?

(ii) How many negative prefixes/suffixes commonly used in English can you remember (14 were mentioned)? Try and think of at least one example of each.

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following sentences with an appropriate negative word.

- I have _____ reason to help you.
- She has _____ been to America.
- I tried everything, but _____ made him happy.
- I knew _____ at the party.
- I have been to London and Paris, but I like _____.
- She is _____ going to believe you.
- _____ of you arrived on time.

3. Create your own.

(i) Rewrite the following sentences using different negative forms.

Example: *At no point in my life have I played basketball.* - *I have never played basketball.*

- It is not possible to leave after 11 o'clock.

- There is no place left to visit in this town.

- He was so nervous, only a few words came out of his mouth.

- They don't know anything.

(ii) Write five true sentences about yourself using the negative words in the box below.

no	none	neither ... nor	never	barely
scarcely	not	nobody/no one	nothing	nowhere

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What grammar should I use to ask questions?



'So once you do know what the question actually is, you'll know what the answer means.'

Douglas Adams (1952–2001)
English author and satirist

A Reflection

Step 29 talks about 'interrogative' sentences. What can you remember about them? Write your thoughts in the box below.

B Contextualization

Which answer would you expect to the following questions? In each case, choose from the box below.

a. Yes	b. a person	c. a place	d. No
e. a reason	f. either Yes or No	g. a time	

The weather's not getting any better, is it? **d**

Has she left? ____

Did he live in London? ____

When did he go to school this morning? ____

She goes to university, doesn't she? ____

Where did she live in London? ____

Can his brother swim? ____

Why is it raining? ____

Do you speak German? ____

Which friend has been working? ____

Does he live in Berlin? ____

Did he go to school this morning? ____

You're arriving at nine o'clock, aren't you? ____

Who has finished their essay? ____

What is the difference in tone between the following two sets of questions? In each case, decide which is more formal or more informal, and why.

1.

I wonder whether she liked it. _____

C Explanation

What is the main way of asking questions in English?

As discussed in ►Step 29, **interrogatives** are one of the four sentence types in English. It was noted that the purpose of this type of sentence was: (i) to ask questions; (ii) to request information and (iii) to check information. The easiest and most common way for asking questions is to invert (i.e., change the order of) the subject and the first **auxiliary verb**. You should also replace the **full stop** with a **question mark**. Take the following examples of the **present continuous**:

It is raining

(**subject** + auxiliary verb + **main verb**)



Is it raining?

(auxiliary verb + subject + main verb)

Three further examples can be seen in the table below.

Verb form	Declarative sentence	Interrogative sentence
Present perfect	<i>She has left.</i>	<i>Has she left?</i>
Present perfect continuous	<i>My friend has been working.</i>	<i>Has your friend been working?</i>
Past continuous	<i>They were waiting in the queue.</i>	<i>Were they waiting in the queue?</i>
Modal + present simple	<i>His brother can swim.</i>	<i>Can his brother swim?</i>

Where there is no auxiliary verb, use part of the verb to do to make the question. Most often, this will be when using the present simple and past simple. Note that when using the past simple, the auxiliary verb is in the past (i.e., *did*), but the main verb is in the **bare infinitive** (i.e., *go*, *see*, *help*). For example:

- Present simple: *Do you speak German? Does he live in Berlin?*
- Past simple: *Did he go to school this morning? Did he live in London?*

Grammar box: Using prepositional verbs in questions

When a **prepositional verb** is used in a question, the preposition normally comes at the end. E.g., *Which book are you looking for?*

What are Wh~ questions?

Wh~ questions begin with a **question asking word**, namely *what*, *where*, *when*, *which*, *who*, *whose* and *why*. *How* is also included even though it does not begin with Wh~. Wh~ questions are formed by placing the question word before the forms noted above. For example:

- *Why is it raining?*
- *Which friend has been working?*
- *When did he go to school this morning?*
- *Where did she live in London?*
- *Who has finished their essay?*

Wh~ questions are useful when you require more than a straight yes/no answer – where you require specific information. Each of the question words focuses on a specific type of information desired. *Where*, for example, requires a location, *when* a time and *why* a reason.

What are 'question tags' and how can they be used?

In the question types looked at above, the person asking the question does not know the answer to the question. However, there may be occasions where you think you know the answer, and just want to check the information. To do this, you can use a **question tag** – a two-word phrase at the end of the sentence. For example: *You're arriving at nine o'clock, **aren't you?***

To form a question using a question tag, follow this formula:

- Positive sentence – negative question tag
- Negative sentence – positive question tag

When there is an auxiliary verb in the sentence, the question tag uses the same auxiliary verb, and inverts the subject (i.e., *it was* in the main sentences has the question tag *wasn't it?*). When there is no auxiliary verb, *do/does/did* (and their negative forms) are used instead, e.g., *She goes to university, **doesn't she?***

Question tags are more commonly used in spoken English. The way in which you say the question tag can affect its meaning. If your voice goes down, this suggests that you are almost certain that the information is correct. If your voice goes up, this suggests that you are less sure of the information.

(walking in the rain): *The weather's not getting any better, **is it?***

(sun appearing from behind a cloud): *The weather's getting better, **isn't it?***

What more formal / informal ways of asking questions exist?

The types of questions presented so far are 'standard' questions which might be used in general situations. Depending on the context, questions may be asked in a more formal or informal way.

Formal questions

There are a number of phrases which can be placed before some question types in order to make them more formal or polite. These phrases are found in bold in the table. In yes/no questions, *if* or *whether* follows these phrases. For *Wh~* questions, the auxiliary verb is **not** inverted.

Do you know <i>if it is raining?</i>	Do you know <i>why it is raining?</i>
I wonder <i>whether she liked it.</i>	I wonder <i>why she liked it.</i>
Are you able to tell me <i>where she lived in London?</i>	Could you tell me <i>where she lived in London?</i>

Informal questions

Particularly in spoken situations, native speakers may not form questions in a grammatically accurate way. Instead, they may say a **declarative sentence** with a **rising tone**. For example:

She liked it? You coming later? You want to go where? They're leaving when?

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the table below, which summarizes the main ways of asking questions in English. Complete with relevant information.

Type	Structure	Type of answer expected	Example
Yes/No questions	The _____ and the _____ auxiliary verb in the verb phrase are _____.	Either _____ or _____.	<i>Is it raining?</i>
Wh~ questions	_____ word (e.g., _____ / _____ / _____) + same structure as _____ question.	_____ information (e.g., a _____ for <i>who</i> , a _____ for <i>where</i> or a _____ for <i>why</i>).	<i>Why is it raining?</i>
Question tags (QT)	Negative verb + _____ QT / Positive verb + _____ QT. _____ verb is the same in both parts.	Either yes or no. If the QT has a _____ tone, a _____ answer is expected; if the QT _____, a positive answer is likely but less certain.	<i>It's raining, isn't it?</i>

2. Check your understanding.

Rearrange the following to make good questions.

Example: *going to are be you late* = *Are you going to be late?*

- is China the capital of what* _____
- said you do why that think he* _____
- do answer you the understand* _____
- she computer fix her did* _____
- not answer the is that's it* _____

3. Create your own.

Write sample questions which have the following answers. In each case, many different answers are possible.

Sample question	Answers
<i>Does he like watching films?</i>	Yes he does
1.	Last year.
2.	No, it isn't.
3.	New York.
4.	Because it was so hot.
5.	Yes, I think it's going to be late.

What is agreement?

STEP

UNIT H

3

6



'Make fair agreements and stick to them.'

Confucius (551–479 BC)

Chinese teacher, philosopher, editor and politician

A Reflection

Read the sentences below. In each case, there is one problem relating to agreement. Identify the problem and correct it. One example has been done for you.

1. My friends *is* are coming to see me tonight.
2. If he brushes up the mess, he can have another cake.
3. Both is available.
4. She gos to the market every Saturday.
5. Three months are a long time to be away.
6. If the doorbell buzzs, could you let them in.
7. My aunt are visiting tomorrow.
8. Anything are possible.
9. Half of the cakes has been sold.
10. Twenty pounds are expensive for a ticket.
11. The train arrived at his destination.
12. There were no light.
13. My friend Tom, as well as his parents, are going on holiday.
14. The man arrived at her office.
15. She, along with her sister, have been coming here for years.
16. You be late.

B Contextualization

Look at the list of rules related to agreement in English below. Match these rules to the sentences in Part A.

Rule	Sentences
Subjects and verbs must agree with each other in number.	1, 7
Some verbs in the present simple are irregular.	
Some verbs in the 3 rd person present simple take ~es not ~s.	
When using indefinite pronouns, some require a singular verb while others require a plural verb.	
Be careful when the subject and verb are separated from each other.	
When using <i>of</i> to talk about 'parts of a whole', identify whether the noun referred to is singular or plural.	
Sums of money / periods of time use a singular verb.	
Words must agree in gender when they are related to each other.	

Which of the following sentences do you think are correct in English?

Note: you can tick one or both sentences in each case, depending on your viewpoint.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. The company is expanding. | b. The company are expanding. |
| a. The government was voted out. | b. The government were voted out. |
| a. Who made the decision? | b. Whom made the decision? |
| a. Who did you see? | b. Whom did you see? |

c Explanation

What does 'grammatical agreement' mean?

Grammatical **agreement** means that words in different grammatical categories (e.g., **number**, **person**, **gender** or **case**) must have the correct relationship. For example, we would say *The boys walked **their** dog* because *boys* is plural, so it requires the plural possessive **adjective** *their* (rather than *his*). Other areas where agreement is necessary (and where mistakes are frequently made) are outlined in detail below.

How much agreement is there in English?

The short answer to this is: not much. Unlike some languages, where agreement is a critical issue (for example, in languages where nouns have **gender**), English does not have much agreement. However, there are a number of areas where it is important, and where mistakes are often made. These are outlined below.

What are the top ten rules to follow regarding agreement in English?

1. **Subjects and verbs must agree with each other in number.**

If a subject is singular, the verb must also be singular; if a subject is plural, the verb must also be plural.

- *My friends are coming to see me tonight.*
- *My aunt is visiting tomorrow.*

2. **Some verbs in the present simple are irregular.**

Whilst there are many verbs in English which are **irregular** in their **past simple** form, there are a small group of commonly used verbs which are irregular in the present simple as well. The verbs *to be*, *to have*, *to do* and *to go* are all irregular in the third person (i.e., *He-She-It **is** / **has** / **does** / **goes***). The verb *to be* is also irregular in the 1st (*I am, we are*) and 2nd person (*you are*).

3. **Some verbs in the 3rd person present simple take ~es not ~s.**

Verbs which end in so-called **sibilant** sounds (*sh, ch, ss, zz*) also take ~es rather than ~s in the 3rd person singular, i.e., *he/she/it brushes, marches, passes, buzzes*).

4. **When using indefinite pronouns, some require a singular verb while others require a plural verb**

Singular indefinite pronouns (►Step 7) take singular verbs, namely: *each, either, neither, one, no one, nobody, nothing, anyone, anybody, anything, someone, somebody, something, everyone, everybody, everything*.

- *Somebody is calling you.*

Grammar box: Singular or plural indefinite pronouns

Five indefinite pronouns (*some, any, none, all, most*) may have a singular or plural verb, depending on the noun which follows. In the examples below, since *water* is **uncountable**, the verb is singular; since *cups* are **countable** and in the plural, the verb is plural.

- Some of the water was spilt
- [Some of the cups were broken.

■ *Anything is possible.*

Plural indefinite pronouns take plural verbs, namely: *several, few, both, many*.

■ *Both are available.*

■ *Many are called; few are chosen.*

5. Be careful when the subject and verb are separated from each other.

Sometimes a subject and its verb may be separated in a sentence, for example by a **subordinate clause** (►Step 28). When deciding whether the verb should be singular or plural, identify what the subject of the **sentence** is. This may be particularly confusing in sentences which use phrases such as *along with, as well as, in addition to*, etc. For example: *My friend Tom, as well as his parents, **is** going on holiday.* In this sentence, the subject is *my friend Tom*, which is singular. In the following sentence, however, the subject has been pluralized: *My friend Tom and his parents **are** going on holiday.*

6. Group nouns may be singular or plural depending on how they are used in the sentence.

A **group noun** is a noun which refers to a group of people, animals or things. They can be thought of either as singular or plural ideas: this is then reflected by the verb which follows. For example: *The company **is/are** expanding; The government **was/were** voted out; My family **has/have** been living there.* Other group nouns include *army, audience, committee, enemy, gang, group, herd, media, public, staff* and *team*. Generally speaking, group nouns are considered to be singular in American English, while there is more flexibility in British English.

7. When using *of* to talk about 'parts of a whole', identify whether the noun referred to is singular or plural.

As noted in ►Step 8, some nouns can be both countable and uncountable. When such words are combined with words like *per cent, part, fraction, some, all, none, majority, minority*, identify how the word linked to *of* is being used. Thus:

■ *Half of the cakes have been sold / Half of the cake has been eaten.*

■ *There was no light / There were no lights.*

8. Sums of money / periods of time use a singular verb.

Even though the noun used may be pluralized, the verb should be singular.

■ *Twenty pounds **is** expensive for a ticket.*

■ *Three months **is** a long time to be away.*

9. *Whom* may be correct in some circumstances, but it might sound strange.

Whom and *who* are pronouns used in relative clauses (►Step 28). *Who* should be used in the subject position in a sentence, while *whom* should be in the object position. For example: *Who made the decision? / Whom did you see?* In many forms of English, *whom* is becoming less common as it is often considered to be too formal. Very often, *who* is used in both subject and object position.

10. Words must agree in gender when they are related to each other.

Although this is not that common in English, there are occasions where words which are specifically male / female must be followed by, for example, male / female pronouns. For example: *The **man** arrived at **his** office / My **mother** went to **her** class.* This is also the case with words which are neutral (i.e., neither male nor female), e.g., *the **train** arrived at **its** destination.*

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (i) Why were these words used on pages **XX** and **YY**? What must you remember about them?

Category	
Example: <i>some, any, all</i>	<i>Indefinite pronouns which can be followed by singular or plural.</i>
1. <i>brush, buzz, pass</i>	
2. <i>part, per cent, some</i>	
3. <i>each, either, something</i>	
4. <i>months, pounds</i>	

- (ii) Can you think of other words which should go in each category?

Category 1	Category 2
Category 3	Category 4

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following sentences with appropriate forms of the verb in brackets.

- If she _____ (*pass*) the ball, we'll score a goal.
- The enemy _____ (*be*) nearby.
- Nothing _____ (*achieve*) yesterday. It was a disaster.
- Most of the noises _____ (*come*) from one room.
- Ten years is _____ (*be*) a long time to work in one company.

3. Create your own.

Write an example sentence to show your understanding of each of the ten rules regarding agreement in English.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

What grammar can I use to increase my cohesion?



'There is a coherent plan in the universe, though I don't know what it's a plan for.'

Sir Fred Hoyle (1915–2001)
English astronomer and writer

A Reflection

Complete the sentences below with words from the box, all of which can be used to add cohesion to your text.

If you are unsure about what any of the terms mean, check the Glossary at the back of the book or the relevant step in brackets, where more information can be found.

demonstrative pronouns (►7)	linking devices (►21)	pronoun (►7)
proper nouns (►6)	synonyms	common nouns (►6)
punctuation (►41–45)	adverbs (►17, 19)	word family

- ☐ The grammatical job of a _____ is to replace a noun. Examples include *we*, *us*, *our* and *ours*.
- ☐ *London* and *Chris* are examples of _____, while *television* and *milk* are examples of _____.
- ☐ *This*, *that*, *these* and *those* are _____. Their grammatical job is to refer specifically to people, places or things.
- ☐ *Clear*, *clearly*, *clarity* and *clarify* are all in the same _____, since they share the same root.
- ☐ *However* and *although* are examples of _____, respectively joining together sentences and clauses.
- ☐ _____, like *similarly* or *accordingly*, can be used at the beginning of the sentence to link ideas.

B Contextualization

Read the following pairs of sentences. In each case, decide how they differ and which of the two is better.

a. Mr Smith went to Washington with his wife. They went by car because she lost her train ticket!	b. Mr Smith went to Washington with his wife. Mr and Mrs Smith went by car because Mrs Smith lost her train ticket.
a. I live in London. London is very large.	b. I live in London. The city is very large.
a. Nicolaus Copernicus discovered that the Earth moved around the Sun. This idea was revolutionary.	b. Nicolaus Copernicus discovered that the Earth moved around the Sun. The idea that the Earth moved around the Sun idea was revolutionary.

c Explanation

What is 'cohesion'?

Cohesion is a difficult word to explain. In general, it means the way that the different parts of a text link together. If your language is not cohesive, then it will be very difficult for the listener/reader to follow what you are saying. If they cannot follow what you are saying, then you will not be able to communicate properly.

What follows is a list of ten ways in which you can make your speaking/writing more cohesive. It is important to emphasize that you should try and use these strategies in connection with each other.

1. Using **pronouns**

As outlined in ►Step 7, the grammatical job of a pronoun is to replace a noun. Using pronouns will make your English both easier to follow and less repetitive. Repeating the same nouns in a text again and again makes it boring and difficult to read. Whenever you use pronouns in your speaking/writing, the listener/reader must make their own links, which means the cohesion is increased. For example:

Mr Smith went to Washington with his wife. They went by car because she lost her train ticket!



2. Switching between **proper** and **common nouns**

As noted above, texts can become very repetitive if the same words are used all the time. In addition to using pronouns, you can also switch between proper and common nouns (►Step 6). In the following example, London is the proper noun and the city is the common noun: *I live in London. The city is very large.*

3. Using **demonstrative pronouns**

This, that, these and *those* can create cohesion both backwards and forwards. E.g.,

- Backwards cohesion: Nicolaus Copernicus discovered that the Earth moved around the Sun. This idea was revolutionary.
- Forwards cohesion: These are some of the most interesting ideas I have ever heard ... Firstly the idea that Britain went to war because ...

4. Using words in the same word family

Using the same **root word**, but changing its class, can be a way to create more cohesion within a text. The two texts below clearly demonstrate how using words in different classes not only improves the style of a text, but makes it easier to follow.

Text using the same word	Text using the same root word but putting words into different classes
<i>Everyone wants to succeed in life. To succeed requires a lot of hard work. When a job you do succeeds, remember what you did, so that you can repeat this in the future. In this way, you can succeed even more often.</i>	<i>Everyone wants to succeed in life. To be successful requires a lot of hard work. When you do a job successfully, remember what you did, so that you can repeat this in the future. In this way, you can attain even more successes!</i>

5. Putting old information before new information

The normal or expected word order of English is for old information (i.e., information which the reader/listener already knows) to come at the beginning of the sentence, and new information to come afterwards.

6. Using linking devices

Linking devices (**conjunctions** and **adverbs**) can show the relationship either within a **sentence** (between **clauses**) or between different sentences. ►Step 21 focuses on these in more detail.

7. Using parallel structures

This point can perhaps best be explained through the examples below:

- ✗ *In my spare time I like to play football, going to the cinema and to read books.*
- ✓ *In my spare time I like playing football, going to the cinema and reading books.*

Using the same verb forms in the second sentence creates a kind of 'echo effect'. In doing so, this emphasizes the point that they are in a list, and they are talking about the same topic. Jumping about between different forms can be confusing for a reader/listener, making it difficult to follow what has been written/said. A further example can be seen in the sub-headings for this step. In order to show that the parts have a relationship to each other, each sub-heading has the same structure, i.e., *~ing* form + **noun phrase** (using pronouns and **punctuation** correctly, etc.)

8. Introductory adverbs

As outlined in ►Step 21, when an adverb is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it can have two specific functions:

- **It can show the listener/reader how this sentence links to the previous sentence.** For example, *similarly* shows that the second sentence has the same focus as the previous sentence. *Consequently* shows that the sentence which follows is the result or outcome of the sentences coming before. Other adverbs which can be used in this way include *accordingly*, *alternatively*, *particularly* and *specifically*.
- **It can tell the listener/reader something about the whole of the sentence.** If a sentence were to begin *Interestingly*, ... this would be the speaker/writer's way of saying, 'I think this sentence is particularly interesting'. Similar adverbs include *critically*, *crucially* and *importantly*. Sometimes these adverbs tell us something about the feelings of the speaker or writer – e.g., *annoyingly*, *disappointingly*, *happily* and *sadly*.

9. Using synonyms

Although **synonyms** are more a type of 'lexical' rather than 'grammatical' cohesion, it is useful to discuss them here. Using words with similar meanings can help you avoid some of the problems outlined in point 4 above. The rewritten passage below shows a text containing not only a range of word classes, but different words as well:

*Everyone wants to **do well** in life. To be successful requires a lot of hard work. When you do a job **effectively**, remember what you did, so that you can repeat this in the future. In this way, you can attain even more **achievements**!*

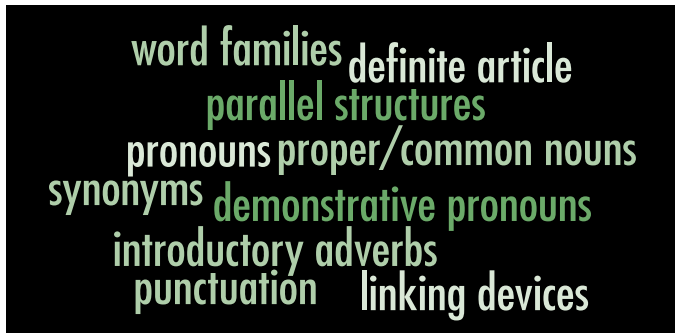
10. Punctuating correctly

Punctuation marks, such as **full stops** (.), **semi-colons** (;), **colons** (:) and **commas** (,) show the relationship between clauses and sentences. In showing this relationship, they provide information about how they are linked. For example, a comma may indicate a list, and a semi-colon can show that two sentences have a particularly close relationship. See ►Unit 1 for more details.

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Look at the word cloud below. Some of the key points from this step are presented here. In each case, reflect on how they can make your writing / speech more cohesive.



2. Check your understanding.

Complete the sentences below to make them more cohesive using words from the box.

accordingly	the building	similarly	It	were eating
ate	them	they	went	were going

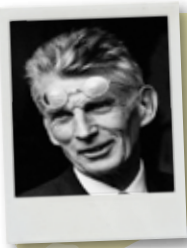
- When we were at the park yesterday, we _____ to the museum, played football and _____ ice-cream.
- No rules were broken; _____, there will be no punishment.
- Are the instructions clear? Do you understand _____?
- Buckingham Palace is where the Queen lives. _____ is large and quite ugly.

3. Create your own.

Rewrite the following passage in a more cohesive way.

Last year, I went on holiday with my parents and brother to New York. Me, my parents and brother had not been on holiday together for many years. New York is an interesting city. New York has hundreds of great places to visit. The great places in New York include museums, zoos and galleries. On our first day, we went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art before going to Central Park Zoo.

Why should I be precise in my choice of grammar?



'Precision is next to godliness.'

Samuel Beckett (1906–1989)

Irish playwright, novelist and poet, part of the Absurdist dramatic movement

A Reflection

The content words in the following sentences are the same. The structure words, however, are different. Read each set of sentences and decide how the meaning changes.

1.
 - a. Amy saw the film last week.
 - b. Amy saw the film last Thursday.
 - c. Amy saw the film five days ago.
 - d. Amy has seen the film before.
2. (part sentences)
 - a. Angela would phone her mother ...
 - b. Angela should phone her mother ...
 - c. Angela could phone her mother ...
3.
 - a. The cup was made in China.
 - b. The cup was made of china.
4. (part sentences)
 - a. Olivia likes that dog ...
 - b. Olivia likes dogs ...

Some nouns can have both a countable and an uncountable form. Complete the table which follows. Sometimes more than one option may be possible.

Countable	Uncountable	Countable	Uncountable
an adaptation	adaptability	an immigrant	
a cooperative			liberalization
	coordination	a participant	
an identity			symbolism

B Contextualization

Write (a), (b) or (c) for sentences 2 and 4 in the spaces below to make complete sentences.

2. _____ if her phone was working.

C Explanation

Why is it important to be precise?

As the **sentences** in Part A clearly show, just one or two words can make a huge difference to a sentence. This is why precision is so important in speaking and writing. In some cases, this means that the **meaning** of the sentence actually changes, whereas in other cases, it means that the **emphasis** of the sentence changes. This idea has already been discussed in Step 3 when the general importance of grammar was outlined. The purpose of this step is to remind you to be precise in your grammatical choices so that the '**butterfly effect**' of grammar does not cause you any problems.

This step outlines five specific areas where you need to be careful about the form of the word you use.

Note: these points refer to the group of sentences in Part A.

1. Using **main verbs**

As the sentences in Example 1 in Part A show, whilst there is no difference in meaning between them, there is a difference in emphasis. Each of the sentences has the same meaning in that they are all talking about the same thing – i.e., when Amy watched the film. However, the emphasis in each case differs. Sentences (a), (b) and (c) all refer to a specific period of time and therefore they take the past simple. The fact that sentences (b) and (c) refer to a specific point while sentence (a) is slightly more vague (i.e., it refers to a whole week), is irrelevant in grammatical terms. Sentence (d), however, refers to 'any time before this moment' and so uses the present perfect.

2. **Modal verbs**

Modal verbs are an area where small mistakes are often to be found. The reason for this is that many of them sound the same – for example *would*, *should* and *could* – and so are easily confused. However, these three modal verbs have very different meanings, namely:

- **Would** = refers to hypothetical situations (i.e., even if somebody wants to do something, it is not possible to know for sure whether it will be done).
- **Should** = refers to things which it is correct or appropriate to do.
- **Could** = refers to things which it is possible to do.

3. **Prepositions**

Using the wrong preposition can change the meaning of a sentence and, potentially, confuse your audience. For example, the two sentences in Example 3 in Part A, The cup was made in China and The cup was made of china, are both correct, but the meaning is different, as the pictures below demonstrate.



in refers to where the cup was made.



of refers to the material it is made from.

4. Determiners

Although determiners (►Step 23) may look insignificant, they can alter the meaning of a sentence quite considerably. Sentence (a) in Example 4 in Part A, *Olivia likes that dog*, refers to a specific dog which is clearly known to the speaker and listener. Sentence (b), however, which contains no determiner, refers to the idea in general.



5. Nouns

Some words have more than one form in a particular word class. This is particularly true for nouns. Often, nouns which have the same **root** may appear in either a **countable** or an **uncountable** form. See the Grammar box for a list of common nouns which have more than one form – and which you should therefore be particularly careful about.

Grammar box: Common words with more than one noun form:

Adaptability-an adaptation; assistance-an assistant; clarification-some clarity; consulting-a consultant; cooperation -a cooperative; creativity-a creation; coordination-coordinates-a coordinator; documentation-a document; expertise-an expert; facilitation-a facility-a facilitator; functionality-a function; identification-an identity; immigration-an immigrant; individualism-individuality-an individual; legislation-a legislature; liberalization-a liberal; participation-a participant; predictability-a prediction; prioritization-a priority; professionalism-a professional; research-a researcher; supervision-a supervisor; symbolism-a symbol; uniformity-a uniform

Summary

1. It is important to be as precise as possible in your English so as to avoid any misinterpretation. Whilst the meaning may be similar, the emphasis may be different.
2. Verbs are a particular word class where you should be careful to be precise, both with main verbs and modal verbs.
3. Prepositions, determiners and nouns are three other word classes where care is needed.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Explain in your own words the mistakes which have been made in each sentence in the table below.

Sentence	Mistake
a. Pass me this cup over there, would you?	Wrong determiner is being used – replace <i>this</i> with <i>that</i> .
b. The department really needs more coordinator.	
c. I should go later – it depends whether it's raining or not.	
d. She'll be there in 10 o'clock.	

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the following sentences with the appropriate type of word given in brackets.

- He's been living in London _____ (*preposition*) 2008.
- Come and look at _____ (*determiner*) moon through my telescope.
- She _____ (*verb*) me the day before yesterday.
- Immigration is a concern in some countries, but other countries actively encourage _____ (*noun*) to come.

3. Create your own.

Write three sentences, as in Part A (sentence 2), which show the different meanings of *would*, *should* and *could*. Ensure that the second half of the sentences clearly show the meaning of the modal verb.

Modal verb	Example sentence
would	
should	
could	

How can I use grammar for emphasis?



'I cannot emphasize enough the importance of a good teacher.'

Temple Grandin (1947–)

American doctor of animal science, animal behaviour and welfare consultant, author and autistic activist



Reflection

Read the following pairs of sentences. In each case, one sentence (a or b) is more emphatic than the other. Decide which one it is, and explain or underline the key language which shows this.

1.
 - a. Make sure the rules are clear, simple and direct.
 - b. The rules need to be clear. They also need to be simple and direct.
2.
 - a. The largest city in Japan is Tokyo.
 - b. Tokyo is the largest city in Japan.
3.
 - a. The email was sent on time.
 - b. Importantly, the email was sent on time.
4.
 - a. I do like your cooking – honestly!
 - b. I like your cooking – honestly!
5.
 - a. She left yesterday.
 - b. She left and went back to her own house yesterday afternoon.
6.
 - a. The President made a mistake.
 - b. Mistakes were made.
7.
 - a. I think it's amazing.
 - b. I think it's amazing!
8.
 - a. Alan is the person who works hardest at school.
 - b. The person who works hardest at school is Alan.
9.
 - a. What we want is less homework.
 - b. We want less homework.

C Explanation

What grammatical strategies can I use to make my English more emphatic?

Initially, it is important to say that the ten methods or strategies given here should not be used all the time in your speaking or writing. If you were to use them all the time, then their impact would be lost. Instead, it is better to use them occasionally in order to maximize the effect which they can have.

You may be familiar with some of the points presented here, since they have already been introduced earlier in the book.

1. 1, 2, 3, Go!

Make sure the rules are clear, simple and direct.

When listing information or giving examples, presenting the information in groups of three can be a useful and effective strategy. This 'tripling' has the effect of the phrase having a distinct pattern, shape and form, and therefore of being more memorable. Some of the most famous speeches in history use this structure – e.g. 'Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness', 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people' and 'Friends, Romans, Countrymen ...'.

If using this strategy, you should use the same grammatical structure. For example, the **phrase** government of the people, by the people, for the people has exactly the same grammatical structure for each three parts (government + **preposition** + the people).

2. Swap bits around.

Tokyo is the largest city in Japan.

Most English **sentences** follow the same basic pattern, which is that general (or already-known) information comes before specific (or new) information. In short, this means that you have to introduce a topic before you comment on it. So in the example sentence, *Tokyo* is the **topic** (i.e., what is being talked about) and the information that it *is the largest city in Japan* is **additional information** about this topic. To change the emphasis, it would be possible to swap the two halves of the sentence around, i.e., *The largest city in Japan is Tokyo*. Since this is not the normal order, the reader / listener would notice this.

3. Start with a bang.

Importantly, the email was sent on time.

*Emphatic adverbs, often placed at the beginning of a sentence, can say something about the whole sentence. Such adverbs often show your **opinion** about the information which follows (e.g., interestingly; controversially) or show its **relationship** with the previous sentence (e.g., particularly, specifically). See ►Step 17 for more information about adverbs.*

4. Use a dummy (**auxiliary**).

I do like your cooking – honestly!

Historically – for example, when William Shakespeare was writing – the verb *do* was commonly used for emphasis as an auxiliary verb in positive statements. Although this use is less common nowadays, it can still be very effective. It can also be used in the past and future (e.g., *She did arrive on time / They will do their homework*).

5. KISS – Keep It Short and Simple!

She left yesterday.

People often think that the longer their sentences, whether in speaking or in writing, the better. However, a long sentence is not necessarily a good sentence. Short, simple

sentences can often be very effective for communicating your idea. In writing, short sentences can be particularly effective at the beginning of a **paragraph** (to present a concise overview of the paragraph) or at the end of a paragraph (to provide a focused summary). A short sentence can also work well as the first or last sentence of the whole essay. However, be careful not to overuse this strategy; otherwise your writing may lack **coherence**.

6. Be 'active', not 'passive'.

The President made a mistake.

Although the **passive voice** has an important function in English (►Step 15), the **active** is more commonly used. The active tends to be more emphatic because it says who is doing the activity, and it increases the strength, power and dynamics of the sentence.

7. ? and !

What do I think? I think it's amazing!

Most sentences in English are **declarative** (►Step 29), a type of sentence used to share information, to make statements and to relate facts. Using a different type of sentence, and their accompanying punctuation marks, can indicate more emphasis to the reader. The main two sentence types for this are the **interrogative** (?), for questions, and the **imperative** (!), to show surprise or amazement.

8. Cleft behind.

The person who works the hardest at school is Alan.

The word cleft means 'divided in two', and this type of sentence is used to focus the reader or listener on specific information. Thus, a **cleft sentence** works in a similar way to a relative clause. Common phrases which can appear at the beginning of a cleft sentence include *the reason why*, *the thing that* and *the place where*. This construction is then followed by an appropriate form of *to be*.

9. What?

What we want is less homework.

A *what* clause is a type of cleft sentence, and so has a similar function. Often, an 'emotive' verb is used in the construction, such as *dislike*, *enjoy*, *hate*, *like*, *love*, *need*, *prefer* and *want*. Remember that a **full stop**, not a **question mark**, is needed when using this construction – even though the sentence begins with *what*.

10. Never ...

Never have I seen such a brilliant film.

The following structure can be used in a similar way as methods 8 and 9 to introduce sentences: **Negative** adverbial + auxiliary/modal verb + subject + main verb.

Summary

1. Carefully choose the times when you use the techniques in this unit – if you overuse them, their effect and impact will be lost.
2. One key strategy for creating emphasis is to focus on the kind of information placed at the beginning of a sentence.
3. Other important strategies include choosing the correct verb form, using different sentence types and using rhetorical techniques (e.g., short sentences, the 'rule of three').

D Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Explain, in your own words, why the following strategies can make your writing more emphatic.

Tripling (= 'the rule of three')	
Dummy auxiliary	
A short sentence	
Question mark / exclamation mark	

2. Check your understanding.

Rewrite the following sentences using the methods in brackets from Part C.

- a. His honesty is the thing I like most about him. (Method 8)

- b. I enjoy going out to dinner with my friends most of all. (Method 9)

- c. That's the best cake I've ever eaten. (Method 7)

- d. My parents enjoyed going to London. (Method 4)

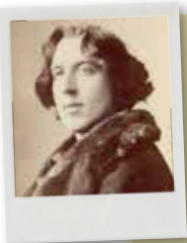
3. Create your own.

Choose four of the strategies listed in Part C and try to write your own sentences. You might consider using some of the words from the box below.

do	did	does	the place where	what	the reason why	especially	clearly
----	-----	------	-----------------	------	----------------	------------	---------

Which strategy?	Example sentence

What are the most common grammar mistakes in English and how can I avoid them?



'Experience is simply the name we give to our mistakes.'

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900)

Irish essayist, novelist, playwright and poet

A Reflection

The table below contains answers to questions about English. These topics have already been looked at earlier in the book. You should write an appropriate question for each, using the information in Step 35 to help you form the question if needed.

Question	Answer
1. What is the normal word order of English?	Subject-Verb-Object
2.	A subject and a verb
3.	The former can be used in a defining or non-defining relative clause, whereas the latter can only be used in a non-defining relative clause.
4.	The former are used when the speaker and listener have a shared understanding of what is meant; the latter when there is no such understanding.
5.	The former make their past simple and past participle forms by adding ~ed; the latter must be learnt separately.

B Contextualization

What is wrong with the following sentences? Correct any mistakes which you see.

1. The boy the ball kicked.
2. She's playing football every week.
3. Arrived home late last night.
4. She's coming at Saturday.
5. That's a same dog we saw in the park.
6. Let's meet at the café, which is nearest to the station.
7. I writed a letter to my nephew.

C Explanation

What are some of the most common grammatical mistakes in English?

Although it is difficult to generalize about the kind of mistakes which people make in English, there are a number of areas which learners commonly find difficult. Ten of these common problems are described below, alongside advice about how to avoid them. If you think that any of these specific areas are problems for you, refer to the relevant step for more information.

1. Placing words in the wrong order (►Steps 4, 15)

The boy ^{the} ball kicked.

In English, unlike some language, **word order** is important. The usual word order of English is **Subject-Verb-Object** (although the order can be reversed if the verb is in the **passive voice**).

■ **How to avoid mistakes:** Be clear about the differences in word order between English and your own language.

2. Using the wrong verb form (►Steps 13, 14)

She's ^{plays} playing football every week.

When using verbs, remember you must decide on their **tense** and **aspect**. There are a number of verb forms which may be commonly confused, which may often be the result of **mother tongue interference**. Two of the most commonly confused pairs of verb forms are the **present simple** and **present continuous** (*I play* vs *I am playing*), and the **past simple** and **present perfect** (*I went* vs *I have gone*).

■ **How to avoid mistakes:** for present simple/continuous, ask whether what you are talking about happens regularly (= present simple) or whether it is only temporary (= present continuous). For past simple/present perfect, ask whether what you are talking about has already finished (= present perfect).

3. Writing incomplete sentences (►Steps 28, 29)

I [^] Arrived home late last night.

Every sentence must contain a **subject** (= a **noun**) and a **verb**. If a sentence does not contain one of these items, it is not a complete sentence.

■ **How to avoid mistakes:** When checking your writing, go through each sentence and tick the subject and verb in each to make sure you have not forgotten one or the other.

4. Using the wrong preposition (►Step 22)

She's coming ^{on} ~~at~~ Saturday.

Prepositions are quite difficult to use correctly. Many languages do not use them, but in English they are very commonly used. As such, prepositions may often be forgotten, or else used incorrectly. When this happens, it can be hard for the listener / reader to understand you.

■ **How to avoid mistakes:** When you are unsure which preposition to use, go with what you feel is correct. You may well be right. You can also search online for **verb-preposition** and **noun-preposition** combinations. In the example above, *on Saturday* gets millions of hits if you type this combination into a search engine, whereas *at Saturday* or *in Saturday* gets very few.

5. Using **articles** incorrectly (►Steps 24, 25)

That's ^{the} same dog we saw in the park.

Since articles are not used in many languages, many learners of English find them difficult. As such, they may panic and just guess which article should be used.

- **How to avoid mistakes:** As shown in Steps 24 and 25, there are a series of questions which you can ask in order to decide whether an article is needed, and if so, which article.

6. Mixing up defining and non-defining **relative clauses** (►Step 28)

Let's meet at the café ^{no comma needed} which is nearest to the station.

A relative clause uses relative pronouns such as *who*, *whose*, *which* and *that* to provide more information about the noun phrase which comes before. There are two types of relative clause, namely **defining** and **non-defining**.

- **How to avoid mistakes:** Defining relative clauses contain 'essential' information about the noun. Both *that* and *which* can be used, and no comma is required. Non-defining relative clauses contain 'additional' information. They cannot use *that*, and require a **comma**.

7. Confusing **irregular** and **regular** verbs (►Step 12)

I ^{wrote} ~~writed~~ a letter to my nephew.

Although the majority of verbs in English are regular (i.e., the past simple and past participle is formed by adding *-ed* to the infinitive), many of the most commonly used verbs in English are irregular (i.e., their past forms cannot be predicted, but must be learnt and remembered).

- **How to avoid mistakes:** Learn the irregular forms of commonly used verbs. Whilst you may know very common ones (e.g., *go-went-gone*), you may not be aware of others (e.g., *grow-grew-grown*; *write-wrote-written*).

8. Confusing **countable** and **uncountable** nouns (►Step 8)

*Some equipment in the gym was broken.
~~Three equipments in the gym were broken.~~*

English distinguishes between countable nouns (which can have a number placed before them, e.g., *table*, *dog*) and uncountable nouns (which cannot – e.g., *air*, *water*). This distinction does not exist in many languages.

- **How to avoid mistakes:** Learn which **common nouns** in English are generally considered to be uncountable. Also learn those which can be both.

9. Being unclear about what pronoun is referred to (►Step 7)

Take ^{the desk} the desk out of my office and paint it.

When there are many words between a noun and the **pronoun** which replaces it, the sentence may not make sense.

- **How to avoid mistakes:** Check each pronoun, and make sure it is clear which word it refers to. If not, change the structure of the sentence, or use the original noun.

10. Putting **adverbs** in the right place in a sentence (►Step 19)

Correctly she answered the question.

Adverbs in English should come either in initial, mid or end position according to which type of adverb it is, and what its job is in the sentence.

- **How to avoid mistakes:** Study the table on page XX to help you decide where to place an adverb.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Without looking at Part A, answer the following questions.

1. What is the normal word order of English?	
2. What are the two things that every sentence should contain?	
3. How should <i>which</i> and <i>that</i> be used differently in relative clauses?	
4. When are definite and indefinite articles used?	
5. What is the difference between regular and irregular verbs?	

2. Check your understanding.

Read the following passage. Correct any mistakes you find.

Sally lived in London since three years. His house is small flat above a train station. It is having five rooms. Two bedrooms, a lounge, a kitchen and a bathroom. There are a lot of furnitures in the rooms. Best thing about the house is the views at the window of London.

3. Create your own.

Write sentences which contain the following information.

Information to include	Example sentences
1. A sentence which contrasts the present simple and present continuous	<i>I usually play basketball on Fridays, but at the moment I am playing on Tuesdays.</i>
2. The past form of <i>meet</i> and a non-defining relative clause	
3. Clear use of subject pronoun and an uncountable noun	
4. Correct placement of <i>yesterday</i> and a sentence with the past simple	

What is punctuation for?

STEP

UNIT 1

4

1



'Punctuation, is? Fun!'

Daniel Keyes (1927–2014)
American author

A Reflection

Read the following passage, which contains no punctuation or capital letters. What effect does the lack of punctuation have?

a brief history of the united nations
the united nations is an international organization founded in 1945 in San Francisco originally there were 51 member states now there is an incredible 193 theyre led by a secretary-general and their main areas of responsibility are as follows law security economics human rights and political freedom in recent years they have also had to deal with the terrible spread of hiv aids equality is at the centre of its constitution saying that it believes in the dignity of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women

B Contextualization

Now look at the passage with its punctuation reinserted. Reread it, and notice how much easier it is to read and understand.

A Brief History of the United Nations

The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945 (in San Francisco). Originally there were 51 member states; now there is an incredible 193! They're led by a Secretary-General, and their main areas of responsibility are as follows: law, security, economics, human rights and political freedom. In recent years, they have also had to deal with the terrible spread of HIV/AIDS. Equality is at the centre of its constitution, saying that it believes 'In the dignity ... of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women.'

Read the passage again and highlight the punctuation marks. You should find 12. Write these punctuation marks next to the sentence which correctly states their main purpose and function. If you know its name in English, write this as well.

Marks the end of a sentence	full stop.	Provides extra, non-essential information	
Signifies the exact words somebody has said or written		Shows that a sentence is a question	

c Explanation

What is the purpose of punctuation?

When we speak, there are many different ways in which we can add emphasis (e.g., speaking louder), show that something is important (e.g., pausing before saying it) or indicate that we have finished making a point (e.g., changing our **tone**). To do the same in writing, **punctuation** is needed (in these examples, we could use ! and . respectively.) Clear punctuation can help a reader understand you more easily.

What are the key punctuation marks in English, and what do they do?

Marks the end of a sentence	full stop .	Provides extra, non-essential information	brackets () or [] or { }
Signifies the exact words somebody has said or written	quotation marks “ ” or ‘ ’	Shows that a sentence is a question	question mark ?
Denotes missing information	ellipsis ...	Says a sentence is surprising or interesting	exclamation mark !
Indicates possession or missing letters	apostrophe '	Presents a choice or alternative	slash/oblique /
Divides a sentence into smaller units	comma ,	Shows that two sentences are closely related	semi-colon ;
Joins two words/ syllables together	hyphen -	Shows that two parts of a sentence are connected	colon :

Three key facts about each of these 12 punctuation marks are presented below.

1. Quotation marks (“ ” or ‘ ’): Signify the exact words somebody has said or written.

- The choice between double (“ ”) and single (‘ ’) quotation marks is generally a matter of preference or style.
- Quotation marks can be used around the title or name of something.
- They can indicate that a particular word is controversial or debatable.

2. Question mark (?): Shows that a sentence is a **question**.

- Should not be used for **indirect questions**.
- Sometimes (but not always) used for **rhetorical questions**.
- There should never be more than one in a sentence (the following are both **wrong**: *Don't you like coffee???* and *¿Don't you like coffee?*).

3. Apostrophe ('): Indicates possession or missing letters.

- Adding 's is the normal way of indicating possession in English.
- Only add an apostrophe if there is possession, not just if the word ends in ~s.
- *Can't, isn't*, etc. are found in informal English. In formal English, use full forms.

4. **Comma (,)** (►Step 42): Divides a sentence into smaller units.
 - A comma in writing is similar to a pause in speaking.
 - Commas are most commonly used to separate items in a list.
 - Commas separate **clauses**, not sentences.
5. **Exclamation mark (!)**: Says a sentence is surprising or interesting.
 - Not very common in formal English (e.g., essays/business letters, etc.).
 - Never use more than one unless the text is very informal (e.g., an email to a friend).
 - There should be a space after an exclamation mark, just like a full stop.
6. **Slash/oblique (/)**: Presents a choice or alternative.
 - Generally, there is no space before or after the slash/oblique (e.g., *Dear Sir/Madam*).
 - Used in well-known **abbreviations** (e.g., *Tell me your bank a/c [= account] number / I'll send it c/o [= care of] Jim*).
 - Can be used to mean per when talking about weights and speeds (e.g., *It goes at 100 km/h [= kilometres per hour] / Petrol costs £2/litre*).
7. **Full-stop (.)**: Marks the end of a sentence.
 - When typing, a space should be left after a full stop.
 - Can sometimes be used after people's initials (e.g., *T.S. Eliot*), in abbreviations (e.g., *Mon., Tues.*) and in acronyms (e.g., *former U.S.S.R.*).
 - When used in web addresses, the word *dot* is normally used (e.g., *dot com*).
8. **Hyphen (-)** (►Step 44): Joins two words/syllables together.
 - The purpose of hyphens is to clarify meaning and avoid confusion.
 - Most commonly used to form compound nouns and adjectives (e.g., *Secretary-General, world-famous*).
 - Used to form numbers between 21 (*twenty-one*) and 99 (*ninety-nine*).
9. **Ellipsis (...)**: Denotes missing information.
 - Major use is for **quotations**, where less relevant detail can be cut or to combine two separate parts of a quotation to emphasize a point being made.
 - Can be used at the end of a sentence to imply 'there is more'.
 - Useful to save space and can make your writing more efficient.
10. **Brackets ((), [], { })**: Provides extra, non-essential information.
 - Often used for **definitions**, particularly with abbreviations.
 - Used when the number of something is not known – e.g., *Can I have your phone number(s)?*
 - When used at the end of a sentence, the final punctuation mark (full stop/question mark/exclamation mark) appears outside the brackets.
11. **Semi-colon (;)** (►Step 43): Shows that two sentences are closely related.
 - Often followed by a linking device which shows the close relationship between the sentences (e.g., *however, therefore, in other words*).
 - Can also be used to separate items in a list where there is other punctuation.
 - Semi-colons are followed by **lower-case** (not capital) letters.
12. **Colon (:**) (►Step 43): Shows that two parts of a sentence are connected.
 - Colons show relationships such as: explanations, reasons and definitions.
 - Colons also commonly indicate lists or series.
 - Colons are followed by lower-case (not capital) letters.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Read the passage below and complete the statements which follow in order to show your understanding.

The history of Western^(a) feminism can be divided into three well-known^(b) 'waves'^(c). The first wave focused on *de jure* (official)^(d) inequalities. The second wave, sometimes known as the women's^(e) liberation movement, focused on legal and social equality for women. The third wave,^(f) which began in the 1990s, challenges the dominance of middle-class/white women^(g) in debate about feminism.

- a. A capital letter is used _____ *because Western is a proper noun.*
- b. A hyphen is used _____
- c. Quotation marks are used _____
- d. Brackets are used _____
- e. An apostrophe is used _____
- f. A comma is used _____
- g. A slash/oblique is used _____

2. Check your understanding.

Each of the sentences below contains at least one punctuation / capital letter mistake. Explain the mistakes and then write out the sentence correctly.

- a. My mother, is a teacher

- b. do you still speak to your ex-husband.

- c. the british broadcasting corporation bbc is a large tv company in the uk.

- d. She asked have you seen my fathers glasses"

3. Create your own.

The following passage has no punctuation or capital letters. Correct it so that it makes sense.

In 1893 new zealand became the first county to grant universal suffrage ie where everyone had the right to vote nine years later, the same occurred in Australia in the uk things took slightly longer a movement called the Suffragettes led by emmeline pankhurst was founded in 1903 the suffragettes main demand was simple equal political rights this was finally achieved in 1928

When do I need to use commas?



'I have been fighting over commas all my life.'

Mark Helprin (1947–)

American novelist, journalist and conservative commentator

A Reflection

Look at the following pairs of sentences and think about the significant difference in meaning between the two.

Let's eat Grandad.

Let's eat, Grandad.

I like cooking my family and my dog.

I like cooking, my family and my dog.

Now complete the following sentence in your own words:

Commas are important because ... _____

B Contextualization

Read the following passage and in each case match up the comma use to its description in the table below.

Margaret Thatcher, [1] the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, entered Parliament in 1959. She defeated Ted Heath, [2] who was her leader, in a party election in 1975. After defeating Heath, [3] she led her party to victory in the 1979 General Election by 2,165,000 [4] votes. Overall, [5] she won three general elections: in 1979, [6] 1983 and 1987. Therefore, [7] it can be said that she was one of the most successful British Prime Ministers, [8] but she still remains a controversial, divisive [9] figure today. As one famous historian argued, [10] 'You either loved her or hated her. There was no middle-ground.'

When commas are used	Number
After a noun/noun phrase when using a non-restrictive relative clause	1
When defining a noun/noun phrase	
To separate elements in a series or list	
To separate adjectives when they come before a noun	
Before a coordinating conjunction which links two independent clauses	
After a dependent clause when it begins the sentence	
Between a reporting expression and direct speech	
To divide large numbers into thousands	

C Explanation

What are commas for?

Commas are important because they help to clarify meaning and avoid misunderstanding. For example, the difference in meaning in the pairs of sentences in Part A is huge – and obviously very important! Let's look at the second example in detail, where clearly the second meaning is what is meant.

- ***I like cooking my family and my dog*** is a combination of these two ideas: (a) I like cooking my family and (b) I like cooking my dog.
- ***I like cooking, my family and my dog*** is a combination of these three ideas: (a) I like cooking, (b) I like my family and (c) I like my dog.

Students of English often find commas difficult for a variety of reasons. Often this is because commas are either not used in their own language, or else they are used in a different way. In addition, it is also the case that the rules for using commas can seem complicated. One strategy which can give you a good indication of whether a comma is needed is to say: if I said this, would I pause? If the answer is yes, then it is likely that a comma is needed.

Indeed, native speakers of English often find it difficult themselves to know when to use commas. Not only this, but usage of the comma in **British English** (BrE) and **American English** (AmE) is different. However, by following a few key rules, your ability to use commas will increase considerably. These rules, based on BrE, are presented below.

What are the most common uses of the comma in English?

1. When defining a **noun/noun phrase**

Margaret Thatcher, the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, entered Parliament in 1959.

The normal structure of a **sentence** in which you give a definition is as follows: term to be defined + comma + definition + comma + **verb phrase**.

2. After a noun/noun phrase when using a non-restrictive **relative clause**

She defeated Ted Heath, who was her leader, in a party election in 1975.

Relative clauses (►Step 28) provide information about the noun/noun phrase which comes before. When this information is considered 'additional' or 'non-essential', a comma should be used. In the example, the information *who was her leader* is not essential to the reader to understand the sentence – i.e., if it was not there, we would still understand the sentence. Therefore, a comma is added.

3. After a **dependent clause** when it begins the sentence

After defeating Heath, she led her party to victory ...

In most English sentences with an **independent (main)** and **dependent (subordinate) clause** (►Step 26), the independent clause comes first. However, at times this order may be reversed. In the example, the writer could have said *She led her party to victory after defeating Heath*, but they chose to invert the order to emphasize the other point. When this happens, a comma must follow the dependent clause. Dependent clauses often begin with **conjunctions** such as *although, after, as, because, before, if, since, unless, until, when* and *while*.

4. To divide large numbers into thousands

... by 2,165,000 votes.

However, note that commas are **not** used in dates (e.g., 2013, not 2,013) or for a decimal point (i.e., £1.45, not £1,45; 3.14, not 3,14).

5. After introductory phrases

Overall, she won three general elections ...

These phrases, often quite short, provide information which the reader needs to know before understanding the rest of the sentence. Sometimes it may be a one-word adverb; other times it may be an **adverbial phrase** or **prepositional phrase**.

6. To separate elements in a series or list

... in 1979, 1983 and 1987.

When two elements are in a list, only **and** is needed to join them. For example, *Margaret Thatcher won re-election in 1983 **and** 1987.* However, when there are three or more elements, the items first in the list are separated by commas, but there is no comma before the **and** in usual BrE (see Grammar box).

Grammar box:
The 'Oxford' or serial comma

Some people prefer to put a comma before the **and** in all such lists, which is known as the Oxford or serial comma. It is commonly used in American English, but less so in British English. However, inserting this additional comma can help to clarify meaning where there is a change of idea or form in a list. For example:

Margaret Thatcher was controversial, divisive, and someone who provoked either love or hate in others.

7. After linking words which join two sentences together

She won three general elections: in 1979, 1983 and 1987. Therefore, it can be said that ...

Many sentences are joined by words such as adverbs of conjunctions (►Steps 17 and 21). These words show the relationship of the current sentence to the previous one. For example, *consequently* (an adverb) and *thus* (a conjunction) show a cause and effect relationship. A comma should be used when performing this job.

8. Before a coordinating conjunction which links two independent clauses

... She was one of the most successful British Prime Ministers, but she still remains ...

When linking two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *or*, *for*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*), a comma is placed between them.

9. To separate adjectives when they come before a noun

... a controversial, divisive figure today.

When more than one adjective is used to describe a noun, a comma must come between the words.

10. Between a reporting expression and direct speech

As one famous historian argued, 'You either ... no middle-ground.'

Note that when the reporting verb (e.g., *say/state/argue/tell*) comes first, a comma immediately comes after it (before the **quotation marks**). When the quotation comes first, the comma comes after the final quotation marks (i.e., *'... no middle ground', argued one famous historian*).

What are the most common comma-related mistakes in English?

- 1. Don't use a comma where you should use a full stop.** Commas separate clauses, whereas full stops separate sentences. When deciding which piece of punctuation to use, consider whether you are linking two independent clauses, or a main clause and a subordinate clause.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Complete the following statements about the rules for using commas.

- a. When _____ a noun/noun phrase.
- b. After a noun/noun phrase when using a _____ relative clause.
- c. After a _____ clause when it begins the sentence.
- d. To divide large numbers into _____.
- e. After _____ phrases.
- f. To separate elements in a _____ or _____.
- g. After _____ words which join two sentences together.
- h. Before a _____ conjunction which links two _____ clauses.
- i. To separate _____ when they come before a noun.
- j. Between a _____ expression and _____ speech.

2. Check your understanding.

- (i) The following passage has had all its commas removed. Insert them where you think they should be.

Margaret Thatcher's first ministry which took place between 1979 and 1983 was very controversial. Three key events of this ministry were economic reforms the restriction of trade unions' power and going to war against Argentina. Interestingly many people think that Thatcher only won the 1983 General Election because she won this war. However others argue that her economic reforms were necessary and this is what won her the election. Since she won the election so convincingly her decisions in her second ministry were even more radical.

- (ii) Next to each comma, write a number (1–10) according to which usage from Part C it refers to.

Note: you will not need all the numbers.

3. Create your own.

- (i) Look at the following notes, which were taken from a lecture entitled 'Margaret Thatcher's economic policies'. Using the notes given, write a paragraph summarizing this topic.

Margaret Thatcher's economic policies

In general – MT's economic policy was about freedom

Believed in monetarism = an economic system where the government has little influence

3 benefits of monetarism: low inflation and greater efficiency and less borrowing

BUT – caused unemployment to rise above 3 million. MT believed she was still right – even though lots of people lost their jobs

When should I use colons and semi-colons?



'Here is a lesson in creative writing. First rule: do not use semicolons ... All they do is show you've been to college.'

Kurt Vonnegut (1922–2007)
American novelist

A Reflection

Read the following statements and decide whether they apply to colons (:), semi-colons (;), both or neither.

Statement	Colon	Semi-colon	Both	Neither
Can be followed by an independent clause				
Can be followed by a dependent clause				
Should appear at least once in every paragraph				
Can be useful for dividing up long sentences				
Are followed by a lower-case letter				

B Contextualization

Read the following sentences, each of which shows a different use of the semi-colon. For each, decide the reason why.

1. At the supermarket, I bought a red, juicy apple; a long, green cucumber; and a soft, blue towel.
2. I spoke to my Mum on the phone yesterday; she likes me to call once a week.
3. We wanted to go to the cinema; however, we didn't have enough money.

When semi-colons are used	Sentence
To show a close relationship between independent clauses (which are not linked by a coordinating conjunction)	
To show a close relationship between independent clauses (which are linked by a linking word)	
To separate items in a list which already contains punctuation	

Read the following sentences, each of which shows a different use of the colon. For each, decide the reason why.

1. Last night at the cinema, I saw the 20:00 showing of *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde*.

C Explanation

Why are colons and semi-colons important?

Full stops and commas are the most commonly used pieces of punctuation in English. However, colons and semi-colons are also relatively common, especially in formal English. Knowing how to use them properly can improve the quality and accuracy of your writing. People (both native and non-native speakers of English) frequently make mistakes in using them. However, by understanding a few key rules, you can quickly gain a good understanding about how they work.

Note

It is sometimes thought that a semi-colon is more like a comma than a full stop, when actually it is the other way around.

Full stops join sentences, as do semi-colons. Commas join clauses.

What are the most common uses of the semi-colon in English?

1. To show a close relationship between independent clauses (which are not linked by a coordinating conjunction)

I spoke to my Mum on the phone yesterday; she likes me to call once a week.

If you link two independent clauses with a semi-colon, you are showing that they are of equal weight and importance. Using a semi-colon instead of a full stop shows that the sentences have a close relationship. **Note:** do not use a semi-colon if you are joining the clauses with coordinating conjunctions (e.g., for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

2. To show a close relationship between independent clauses (which are linked by a linking word)

We wanted to go to the cinema; however, we didn't have enough money.

Where sentences have a close relationship and they are linked by a conjunction or adverb such as otherwise, therefore, however, consequently, similarly, etc., a semi-colon can be used to join them.

3. To separate items in a list which already contains punctuation

At the supermarket, I bought a red, juicy apple; a long, green cucumber; and a soft, blue towel.

Semi-colons are most frequently used in lists where commas are also used. Semi-colons clearly show which items are being separated. In the example sentence, imagine that the semi-colons were replaced by commas. It would be much harder to understand.

Semi-colons can also be used in a bullet-pointed list to separate the items.

Top Tip: Am I using the semi-colon correctly?

Ask yourself, 'Could I use a full stop instead?' or 'Could I join the sentences with and?' If the answer is yes, then you are using it correctly.

What are the most common uses of the colon in English?

1. To explain, summarize or define

I love books: I particularly like the Harry Potter novels.

A colon can be used where the second sentence explains, summarize or defines the first sentence, and where there is no coordinating conjunction.

2. To introduce a list or series

There are three things you mustn't forget: your tickets, passport and money.

The sentence before a colon should always be an independent clause (i.e., not a **dependent clause**). In less formal writing, this rule can be relaxed. When writing lists, the information which follows can sometimes use bullet points.

3. Between figures in times and between titles and subtitles

Last night at the cinema, I saw the 20:00 showing of Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde.

When referring to times of day, the colon divides hours and minutes; in titles, it separates the main title from the subtitle.

Grammar box: Use of colons in academic English

In addition, colons have two specific uses in academic English:

1. For in-text references – *According to Smith (2010: 208).*
2. To introduce long quotations – *Smith (2010) argues that: ' ... '.* On these occasions, the quotation should come on the next line.

What are the similarities between colons and semi-colons?

1. Both colons and semi-colons must be followed by a lower-case letter.

This rule applies unless the word which follows is *I*, a **proper noun** (e.g., *Sam, London*, etc.) or where the colon signifies the following text is a subheading or topic (e.g., the headings in the Grammar boxes in this book).

2. Both colons and semi-colons can be useful for dividing up longer sentences.

But don't overuse them. There is no specific number of times that you should use a colon or semi-colon per paragraph. Sometimes, using shorter sentences is better. Instead of using a colon, it is sometimes better to use a comma followed by a word/phrase like *such as / namely / that is / for example*:

*There are three things you mustn't forget, **namely** your tickets, passport and money.*

However, you should remember that **only an independent clause can follow a semi-colon; either an independent or dependent clause can follow a colon.**

Summary

1. Although colons and semi-colons are not as common as full stops or commas, they can help to make your writing clearer and more accurate.
2. Semi-colons show close relationships between sentences, and can be useful in separating items in lists.
3. Colons are useful to explain, summarize, define and put items in series or lists.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

A student has taken notes about how colons and semi-colons are used. Complete the gaps in their notes with appropriate words.

<i>Usage</i>
They are both followed by _____ - case letters.
Can be useful in _____.
<i>Function</i>
S-Cs show _____ relationships between sentences.
Cs can be used to show many different types of relationships, e.g., _____.
<i>Grammar</i>
Semi-colons must be followed by an _____ clause.
Colons can be followed by _____.
<i>In essays</i>
The colon has two specific uses in academic writing – for _____ references and when introducing _____ quotations.

2. Check your understanding.

Look at the following sentences and decide whether the colon or semi-colon is used correctly in each case.

- I'll meet you at 12;30.
- A wolf can be defined as follows: the largest member of the dog family, which lives in the wild.
- New York is the largest city in the USA; but it is not the capital city.
- I have lots of pets; two dogs, three cats and a snake!

3. Create your own.

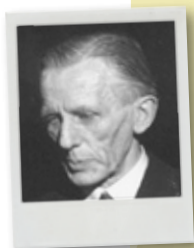
Rewrite the following sentences using a colon or semi-colon as appropriate.

- I have four exams tomorrow. The exams are Maths, English, History and Geography.

- I have to leave now. Otherwise, I will miss my train.

- My diet isn't going very well. For breakfast, I ate eggs, bacon and chips. For lunch, I had a hamburger and chips. For dinner, I ate another hamburger, more chips and some ice-cream.

When should I use hyphens?



'If you take hyphens seriously you will surely go mad.'

Sir Ernest Gowers (1880–1966)
English author of books on English usage

A Reflection

1. Look at the cartoons below. What difference does the hyphen make?



B Contextualization

Which of the following are correct? Tick those you think are acceptable in English, and put a cross next to those which are not.

Note: in some cases, both options might be possible.



- a. Richard Nixon is an ex-president / expresident of the USA. ✓ X
- b. During his time as president, Bill Clinton sent only two e-mails / emails.
- c. George Bush is a politician who is well-known / well known.
- d. Three-quarters of the 43 US Presidents have been millionaires.
- e. Abraham Lincoln has been voted America's best-ever / best ever president.

C Explanation

Why are hyphens used in English?

The major use of **hyphens** in English is to join words together. Unfortunately, there is no universal agreement on when hyphens should be used. In fact, many dictionaries and style manuals disagree on this point. As such, several words occur in both their hyphenated and non-hyphenated form – for example *email/ e-mail*, *pigeonhole/pigeon-hole* and *voiceover/ voice-over*.

In general, the use of the hyphen in written English is decreasing. The trend is that words which have a hyphen tend to lose it over time. However, there are still many occasions when hyphens should be used. The general rules are outlined below.

Top Tip: How do I know whether to use a hyphen or not?

1. Look the word up in a dictionary and see whether it has a hyphen.
2. Search for the word or phrase online in both hyphenated and non-hyphenated form. See which returns more hits. The one with more hits is more likely to be the most commonly used form.

When should hyphens be used?

The main circumstances in which hyphens should be used in English are as follows:

1. **To form compound adjectives** (= adjectives composed of more than one word). Compound adjective structures take many forms, including **noun + adjective** (e.g., world-famous), **noun + participle** (e.g., custom-built) and **adjective + participle** (e.g., good-looking). See ►Step 20 for more examples of compound adjectives.
2. **To form compound nouns** (= nouns composed of more than one word). When forming compound nouns, hyphenation is one of three possible structures. Some compound nouns may also be written as one word or two words. Indeed, some compound nouns can exist in all three forms (e.g., chat-room, chatroom, chat room). Some compound nouns can be written with or without a hyphen (e.g., e-mail, close-up, voice-over). Common compound nouns which are hyphenated include t-shirt, mother/father/sister/brother-in law, dry-cleaning, pen-friend, passer-by, X-ray.
3. **To form numbers between 21 and 99** (e.g., forty-three, two hundred and eighty-six, fifty-three million) and **fractions** (e.g., one-third, three-quarters).
4. **With prefixes, in particular situations:**
 - If the prefix comes before a proper noun (e.g., pre-Socratic, un-American). Note that the proper noun should be capitalized, but the prefix should not (unless at the beginning of a sentence).
 - If the prefix ends with the same vowel as the following words (e.g., re-enter, semi-industrialized). Note that with co~, often both versions are possible (e.g., co-operative/cooperative; co-ordinate/coordinate).
 - With the following specific prefixes: ex~, self~ and all~ (e.g., ex-president, self-service, all-powerful).
 - Where the prefix comes before a date (e.g., post-1945).

5. **Where there are two words acting as one idea to describe a noun** (e.g., a *low-budget* film, a *first-class* idea, a *well-known* politician). **Note:** when the adjectives are placed after the noun, it is usually not hyphenated – *that politician is well known*). A hyphen can also be used in this case in order to make it clear which words belong together. In the example in Part A (pictures 3 and 4), when no hyphen is used you might understand the words *middle* and *aged* working independently (i.e., suggesting that Sam is both in the middle and very old). When the words are hyphenated, they describe each other.

- **To distinguish two different words which have the same spelling and pronunciation.** The example from Part A (pictures 1 and 2) shows this clearly: whilst *re-sign* means to sign again, *resign* means to stop working. There are many examples involving the prefix *re-*, such as *resent/re-sent*, *reform/re-form*, *recover/re-cover*.

Note: Hyphens vs dashes

Although they look similar, hyphens (-) and dashes (– or —) differ in that hyphens are shorter. However, their use is often confused, and many people use them interchangeably. The main use of the dash is:

- **to show a break in thought:** *This is what I – and many others – think.*
- **to indicate a range in value:** *Age 20–40; 1939–1945; 10:00–11:30.*
- **to show a relationship:** *The Paris–Dakar rally; father–daughter relationship.*

Also beware the underscore (▸), which is most commonly found in web and email addresses, where blank spaces are not allowed.

When should hyphens not be used?

Although you may think it necessary, do **not** use hyphens in the following situations:

- **For the majority of prefixes** (e.g., *proactive*, *disinterested*, *prefix*, *postmodern*, *microchip*, *biannual*, *megabyte*)
- **After adverbs ending in -ly** (a *totally brilliant* idea; a *recently discovered* coin).
- **After a letter or numeral where it is the second part** (our *number one* priority; a *Class A* drug; *type 2* diabetes).
- **For verb and preposition combinations** (e.g., *look into*; *break down*; *go in*).
- **Where the adjective in a compound is in its comparative or superlative form** (e.g., the *best ever* president, the *most likely* reason).
- **In chemical formulae** (e.g., *carbon monoxide*, *potassium permanganate*).

Summary

1. The main purpose of hyphens is to clarify meaning. When they can do this, use them; if they do not, don't.
2. Hyphens are most commonly used to form compound words.
3. Hyphens are used with a few prefixes, but generally are not.



Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

In which of the following situations would you use a hyphen?

✓ = always needed ✗ = never needed ? = depends on the situation

Statement	✓	✗	?
a. To distinguish between homonyms			
b. To form compound nouns			
c. After prefixes			
d. For verb and preposition combinations			
e. To form compound adjectives where the adjective is a superlative			

2. Check your understanding.

Read through the following sentences, and in each case decide whether the hyphenated or non-hyphenated version of the word or phrase is correct.

- We were late because our car broke-down / broke down.
- The basic rate of income-tax / income tax in the UK is 20 per cent.
- Do you have any pre-existing / preexisting medical conditions?
- The chair needs to be re-covered / recovered.
- She is the best-known / best known singer in my country.
- It's about ten kilo-metres / kilometres away.

3. Create your own.

Rewrite the following sentences using hyphenated phrases. An example has been done for you.

- When I was in India, I went to a wedding which lasted for three days.

When I was in India, I went to a three-day wedding.

- George Bush, who used to be President, was at the event.

- 75 per cent of the class passed the exam.

- We're going on holiday between the 12th and 19th May.

- She is the sister of my wife.

- I don't know much about history before 1900.

How can I improve my spelling?



'It's a poor mind that can think of only one way to spell a word.'

Andrew Jackson (1767–1845)
Seventh President of the United States (1829–1837)

A Reflection

Look at the following pairs of sentences. For each, decide which is correct.

1.

- a. Did you receive any male?
- b. Did you receive any mail?

2.

- a. The brave knight rode away on his horse.
- b. The brave night rode away on his horse.

In each case below, identify which form(s) of the plural are correct in English?

<input type="checkbox"/> activity	(a) activitys	(b) activities	(c) activityes
<input type="checkbox"/> bus	(a) buses	(b) busses	(c) buss
<input type="checkbox"/> child	(a) childs	(b) children	(c) childes
<input type="checkbox"/> formula	(a) formula	(b) formulae	(c) formulas
<input type="checkbox"/> half	(a) halves	(b) halfes	(c) halves
<input type="checkbox"/> hero	(a) heroes	(b) heros	(c) heroies

B Contextualization

The passage below contains some of the most frequent spelling mistakes made in English. There are 16 in total. Underline all those you can find.

In resen years, Brittish governments have becum more interested in the enviroment. Untill the mid 1990s, there atitude was that it wasn't realy impotent – that it wasn't neccessary too do much about it. Therefor, many governments just ignored the issue. Buisnesses tended to have the same attitude, wich meant that basicly only charities and pressure groups were doing anything.

In the table below, write both the misspelt word and its correct version. An example has been done for you.

C Explanation

Why is spelling important?

Spelling is important for two main reasons. Firstly, to make your meaning clear: incorrect spelling can result in misunderstanding. Secondly, to create a positive impression with the person you are writing to. Since the majority of writing is now done electronically, and spellchecks are extremely common, there is no excuse for many of the spelling mistakes which are made.

What words are commonly misspelt in English?

The following list includes some of the most frequently made spelling mistakes in English. Words spelt incorrectly in the passage from Part B appear in green.

across, accommodate, achieve, acknowledge, actually, analyze, apparently, appearance, appreciate, argument, basically, become, beginning, belief, business, coming, committee, completely, criticism, definitely, dependent, difference, discipline, discussed, eighth, eliminate, embarrass, environment, especially, exaggerate, excellent, existence, experience, extremely, familiar, finally, foreign, forty, forward, further, government, guarantee, height, immediately, important, independent, intelligence, interest, knowledge, laboratory, library, meant, millennium, necessary, neither, nuclear, occasionally, occurrence, parallel, persuade, physically, possession, possible, practical, privilege, probably, psychology, really, receipt, recent, recommend, reference, remember, repetition, rhythm, ridiculous, scene, schedule, separate, similar, sincerely, succeed, surprise, their, therefore, thoroughly, truly, until, unusual, usually, which

Why is spelling difficult, and what are some of the common difficulties?

Non-native speakers of English often find spelling difficult. The main reason for this is that English contains words from many different languages. This means that words are not always written in the same way that they are said. Some of the main problems faced by learners are presented below, along with useful rules and examples / rules where appropriate.

1. Not writing some letters because they are 'silent'

Some words have 'silent' letters: these are letters which appear in the written form, but are not spoken. They may be found at the beginning of a word (e.g., *knight* is pronounced *night*, not *k-night*), in the middle (e.g., in *government*, the **n** is silent), or at the end (e.g., *engine*, where the last sound is **n**).

2. Writing groups of letters incorrectly

You may know how to say a word, but that may not be a clue as to how you write it. The long **ee** and **oo** sounds are particularly difficult in this respect as they can be written in many different ways. For example:

ee sound: *leap, people, brief, me, weird, key, ski*

oo sound: *truth, group, fruit, shoe, blew, blue, through*

3. Using the wrong version of a **heterograph**

Heterographs are words which have the same sound, but which are spelt differently (e.g., *there/their*). Knowing which version to use can be difficult. A list of commonly used heterographs in English appears below:

accept/except	allowed/aloud	ante~/anti~	are/our
ate/eight	for/four	meat/meet	stationary/stationery
band/banned	hear/here	one/won	their/there/they're
bean/been	hole/whole	peace/piece	to/too
break/brake	hour/our	right/write	wait/weight
buy/by/bye	know/no	sea/see	way/weigh
emigrant/immigrant	impotent/important	some/sum	weak/week
flour/flower	mail/male	son/sun	wear/where

4. Not doubling **consonants**

One of the most difficult aspects of English spelling is knowing when, and when not, to double a consonant in a word. *Attitude* for example, has a double *t*, while *British* only has one. Unfortunately, there is no reliable rule to predict when a consonant may or may not be doubled. Common problem letters include **bb** (*hobby/liberal*), **dd** (*hidden/medical*), **ll** (*follow/politics*), **mm** (*summary/limit*) and **rr** (*carry/very*).

5. Using the wrong **plural** form of a word

Notwithstanding the irregular plurals found in English (see Grammar box), the vast majority of English nouns are made plural by adding ~s onto the end of the word. Slight exceptions are as follows:

- For nouns ending ~o which is preceded by a consonant (e.g., *hero*, *potato*), the plural is made by adding ~es (*heroes*, *potatoes*).
- For **nouns** ending in an **f** sound (e.g., *half*), the plural is made by changing it to **v** and adding ~es (*halves*)
- For nouns ending ~y (e.g., *sky*, *lady*), the plural is made by changing it to ~ies (*skies*, *ladies*).
- For nouns ending in a **sibilant** sound (/s/, /z/, /ʒ/, /ʒ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ or /dʒ/) such as *kiss* or *wash*, add ~es (*kisses*, *washes*).

Grammar box: Irregular plurals

aircraft-**aircraft**; analysis-**analyses**; appendix-**appendices**; child-**children**; crisis-**crises**; curriculum-**curricula**; datum-**data**; fish-**fish**; foot-**feet**; formula-**formulae**; index-**indices**; man-**men**; mouse-**mice**; phenomenon-**phenomena**; sheep-**sheep**; species-**species**; thesis-**theses**; tooth-**teeth**; woman-**women**

6. Mixing different types of English together

There are many different versions of English. The two most commonly used are **British English** (BrE) and **American English** (AmE). Whilst there is no 'correct' form, it is best to use the right sort of English in the right context, and not to mix types together. In terms of differences between BrE and AmE, in addition to different words used to describe the same thing (e.g., *anticlockwise* (BrE)/*counterclockwise* (AmE) or *holiday* (BrE)/*vacation* (AmE)), there are four main rules which distinguish BrE and AmE spellings of words, as outlined in the table below.

The common examples below are in BrE.

Note: the house style used in this book is to use BrE, yet AmE ~ize word endings.

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Look at the passage below. Which of the common spelling problems from Part C do the following words represent?

The **government**¹ should **comitt**² more to **meddical**³ expenditure. In particular, I think they should make spending on health for **childs**⁴ a priority. Although they have **past**⁵ many **peaces**⁶ of legislation, this specific issue has been ignored by all **partys**⁷.

No.	Mistake which has been made	Corrections
1	Letter is silent and so has been left out by mistake	govern <u>n</u> ment
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

2. Check your understanding.

(i) Look at the following pairs of words. In each case, tick the version which is spelt correctly and cross out the incorrect version.

which / wich
parallel / parallel
difference / difference
finally / finalay
experience / experience
proby / probably
height / hight
coming / cuming
surprise / surprise
practical / practical
interest / intrest
meant / ment

(ii) Write BrE (British English) or AmE (American English) next to the following words.

neighbour	BrE	catalogue		emphasise		liter	
honor		criticize		theatre		monolog	

3. Create your own.

Write the following words which are being defined. Pay careful attention to the spelling in each case. Clues are provided in each case.

Place you can read books (<i>lib...</i>)	library	One more than 39 (<i>f...</i>)	
A thousand years (<i>mil...</i>)		From another country (<i>for...</i>)	
Male child (<i>s...</i>)		Seven days (<i>w...</i>)	
Belonging to them (<i>th...</i>)		Talk about (<i>dis...</i>)	
Divided, apart from (<i>sep...</i>)		Obtain, get (<i>ach...</i>)	

How can prefixes and suffixes help your academic English?



'Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.'

Seneca (4 BC–65 AD)

Roman Stoic philosopher, statesman, dramatist, tutor and later advisor to Emperor Nero

A Reflection

Prefixes and **suffixes** are parts at the beginning and end of words which can help you understand more about these words. Drawing an arrow, match the following prefixes and suffixes to their meaning. An example has been done for you.

Prefix	Meaning	Suffix	Meaning
ante~	against	~arch/y	love/addiction
anti~	distant	~fusion	like/love
omni~	before	~holic	adjective
re~	half	~ive	mixture
semi~	again	~phile	place
tele~	all	~where	leadership

What other prefixes and suffixes do you know? Write them in the boxes below, alongside their meaning.

Prefixes	Suffixes
bio~ (life)	

B Contextualization

Look at the words highlighted in the following sentences. Based on your understanding of the prefixes and suffixes noted above, write a brief definition of what they mean.

Sentence	Definition of word
a. Have you read her autobiography ?	
a. I need to revise my essay. It's not finished.	

C Explanation

How can understanding prefixes and suffixes help?

Having a good understanding of **prefixes** and **suffixes** can be a very good 'shortcut' to developing your academic English. Many academic words contain prefixes and suffixes (since academic words often come originally from the Greek and Latin languages). There are two particular ways in which knowing prefixes and suffixes can improve your academic English, namely:

- If you come across unfamiliar words in reading and listening – you may be able to guess at the meaning of the word based on your understanding of the prefixes or suffix;
- You can develop your vocabulary very quickly if you know how to form different word classes (e.g., **organisation/organization-organise/organize; active-actively**).

What suffixes are commonly used in academic English?

One of the main functions of suffixes is to create different **word classes**. As discussed previously in ►Step 2, the suffix is often a good indicator of the word class. Typical examples include:

- **Nouns:** **~er** (*manager*); **~(t/s)ion** (*invention/decision*); **~(a/e)nce** (*brilliance*).
- **Verbs:** **~ate** (*indicate*); **~en** (*lengthen*); **~fy** (*fortify*); **~ise/ize** (*criticise/criticize*).
- **Adjectives:** **~al** (*vital*); **~ent** (*convenient*); **~ful** (*cheerful*); **~ous** (*jealous*).
- **Adverbs:** **~ly** (*slowly*)

A list of commonly used suffixes in academic English, alongside an example word and definition, appear in the table below. Some of these words (and those in the prefix table on the following page) appear in the **Academic Keyword List (AKL)** (►Step 47).

Suffix (meaning)	Example word (definition)
~arch (rule/leadership)	<i>monarchy</i> (rule of a king/queen)
~cide (murder)	<i>homicide</i> (murder of another person)
~cracy (government)	<i>democracy</i> (rule of the people)
~dom/~ful/~hood (existence of)	<i>freedom</i> (state of being free)
~fusion (mixture)	<i>confusion</i> (ideas all mixed up)
~graph/y (writing/study)	<i>Geography</i> (study of the earth)
~holic (love/addiction)	<i>alcoholic</i> (addicted to alcohol)
~illion (large numbers)	<i>million</i> (1,000,000)
~ism (ideology)	<i>Buddhism</i> (followers of Buddha)
~ive (adjective)	<i>responsive</i> (responding positively)
~less (lacking)	<i>useless</i> (without a use)
~let (diminutive form)	<i>droplet</i> (small drop)
~metry (measurement)	<i>thermometer</i> (device for measuring heat)
~ology (study of)	<i>Zoology</i> (study of animals)
~phile (like/love)	<i>anglophile</i> (English lover)

What prefixes are commonly used in academic English?

Two of the key jobs which prefixes can do include making a word **negative** (►Step 34), such as *dis~* (e.g., *disappear*), *il~* (*illegal*), *im~* (*immature*), *in~* (*inability*), *ir~* (*irresponsible*) and *un~* (*undo*), and referring to **numbers**, such as *mono~*, *bi~*, *tri~*, *dec~*, *cent~*, *kilo~* and *mega~*: *mono* = one, *bi* = two (e.g., *bicycle*), *tri* = three (*triangle*), *dec* = ten (*decade*), *cent* = 100 (*century*), *kilo* = 1,000 (*kilometre*) and *mega* = 1,000,000 (*megawatt*).

A list of commonly used prefixes in academic English, alongside an example word and definition, appear in the table below.

Prefix (meaning)	Example word (definition)
<i>a~/ab~/an~</i> (not, without)	<i>absence</i> (not being somewhere)
<i>alt~</i> (another, different)	<i>alternative</i> (different option)
<i>ante~- / pre~</i> (before)	<i>ante-natal / pre-natal</i> (before birth)
<i>anti~</i> (against)	<i>anti-social</i> (not liking people)
<i>auto~</i> (self)	<i>autonomy</i> (individual's personal power)
<i>bio~</i> (life)	<i>Biology</i> (study of living things)
<i>co~/con~</i> (with, together)	<i>convention</i> (group of people meeting)
<i>demo~</i> (people)	<i>democracy</i> (government of the people)
<i>eu~</i> (good)	<i>euphemism</i> (polite way of saying something)
<i>ex~</i> (former, previous)	<i>ex-president</i> (former president)
<i>extra~/hyper~</i> (more than usual)	<i>extraordinary</i> (interesting, amazing)
<i>hydro~</i> (water)	<i>hydro-power</i> (energy from a water source)
<i>inter~</i> (between)	<i>international</i> (between countries)
<i>intra~</i> (within)	<i>intravenous</i> (inside a vein)
<i>maxi~</i> (big, most)	<i>maximum</i> (largest value)
<i>mega~</i> (large)	<i>megalomania</i> (obsession with exercising power)
<i>mini~</i> (small, least)	<i>minimum</i> (smallest value)
<i>multi~</i> (many)	<i>multilingual</i> (can speak many languages)
<i>omni~</i> (all)	<i>omnipotent</i> (all powerful)
<i>out~</i> (go beyond)	<i>outperform</i> (perform better than)
<i>post~</i> (after)	<i>posthumous</i> (after death)
<i>pro~</i> (be in favour of)	<i>propose</i> (suggest something)
<i>re~</i> (again)	<i>rewrite</i> (write again)
<i>semi~</i> (half)	<i>semi-circle</i> (half a circle)
<i>sub~</i> (under)	<i>submarine</i> (underwater boat)
<i>super~</i> (above, beyond)	<i>supermarket</i> (large shop)
<i>tele~</i> (distant)	<i>telephone</i> (device for talking from afar)
<i>trans~</i> (across)	<i>transfer</i> (send across)
<i>uni~</i> (same)	<i>uniform</i> (same clothing worn by a group)

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Summarize the reasons why understanding prefixes and suffixes are important in academic English.

--

2. Check your understanding.

(i) What do the following prefixes and suffixes refer to?

Prefix	Meaning	Suffix	Meaning
<i>co~ / con~</i>		<i>~dom</i>	
<i>intra~</i>		<i>~holic</i>	
<i>pro~</i>		<i>~illion</i>	
<i>uni~</i>		<i>~phobia</i>	

(ii) Write definitions of the following words, based on your understanding of the prefixes and suffixes:

<i>autocracy</i>	
<i>megalopolis</i>	
<i>retain</i>	

(iii) Use a dictionary to find three examples of useful, academic words which contain the following prefixes.

Prefix	Example words
<i>anti~</i>	e.g., anti-clockwise
<i>demo~</i>	
<i>inter~</i>	
<i>post~</i>	
<i>sub~</i>	

3. Create your own.

Choose one word from the table above and write a sentence using the word in context.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

How should I use nouns in academic English?



'Poetry is adjectives expressed in nouns.'

Leo Stein (1872–1947)

American art collector and critic

A Reflection

15 of the following nouns are more commonly used in academic English than in general English (i.e., they appear on the Academic Keyword List (AKL)). Which are they?

advantage	analogy	balloon	chair
circumstance	data	evaluation	function
hotel	hypothesis	impact	issue
kilogramme	likelihood	method	perspective
reason	relevance	system	window

B Contextualization

Read the pairs of sentences below. In each case, decide which sentence sounds more academic.

- One of the department's priorities was to create a new computer system.
 - The creation of a new computer system was a priority for the department.
- The development of the algorithm by the university has led to an explanation of the phenomenon by its creators.
 - The university has been developing an algorithm which has led to its creators being able to explain the phenomenon.
- The question of whether the hypothesis is relevant is important.
 - (The relevance of the hypothesis is an important question.
- The circumstances were not known, which meant a lot of confusion was created.
 - The unknown circumstances created considerable confusion.
- The census data showed that the number of English speakers has increased.
 - The data which came from the census showed that the number of people who speak English has increased.

C Explanation

Why are nouns important in academic English?

Nouns are **content words**: they carry the meaning of a text. Without nouns, there would be no language. This is true in general English, but it is especially true in academic English, where nouns are used even more frequently.

What is 'nominalization' and why is it important in academic writing?

Nominalization is the name of the process which turns complicated grammatical **phrases** into clear **noun phrases**. This process will enable your writing to become more focused, and to use less **redundant language**. Often the nominalization process transforms verb phrases into noun phrases.

The sentences from Part B which are more academic appear below. The main reason why they are more academic is because of the nominalized phrases (in bold).

1b. The creation of a new computer system was a priority for the department.

2a. The development of the algorithm by the university has led to an explanation of the phenomenon by its creators.

3b. The relevance of the hypothesis is an important question.

4b. The unknown circumstances created considerable confusion.

5a. The census data showed that **the number of English speakers** has increased.

What should I know about plurals in academic English?

As outlined in ►Step 45, there are a number of nouns in English whose plural is **irregular**. Many such nouns are far more common in academic English than in general English, for example:

analysis-analyses; appendix-appendices (or appendixes); basis-bases; crisis-crises; criterion-criteria; curriculum-curricula; datum-data; diagnosis-diagnoses; focus-foci (or focuses); formula-formulae; hypothesis-hypotheses; index-indices (or indexes); medium-media; parenthesis-parentheses; phenomenon-phenomena; species-species; stimulus-stimuli; thesis-theses

What are 'binomials'?

Binomials are pairs of nouns which commonly occur together, and appear in the format 'X and Y'. Whilst these do appear in general English (e.g., *fish and chips, salt and pepper*), they are far more frequent in academic English. Frequently used binomials include: *aims and objectives; education and training; goods and services; growth and development; health and safety; input and output; justice and fairness; knowledge and skills; law and order; males and females; materials and methods; policy and resources; research and development; strengths and weaknesses; theory and practice; trial and error.*

What are the most commonly used nouns in academic English?

The **AKL** is a group of nearly 1,000 words which are commonly used in academic writing. The list specifically includes words which are frequent in a wide range of academic texts, but which do not appear especially frequently in 'general' English. As such, using the nouns on this list will enable you to sound more professional in your essays and presentations.

The overwhelming majority of the words on the AKL can be used in many different disciplines (e.g., category, *factor* and *outcome*), whereas others are used more specifically in particular subject areas (e.g., percentage – Mathematics/Economics; sex – Biology).

A full list of the nouns on the AKL are as follows.

ability, absence, account, achievement, act, action, activity, addition, adoption, adult, advance, advantage, advice, age, aim, alternative, amount, analogy, analysis, application, approach, argument, aspect, assertion, assessment, assistance, association, assumption, attempt, attention, attitude, author, awareness, balance, basis, behaviour, being, belief, benefit, bias, birth, capacity, case, category, cause, centre, challenge, change, character, characteristic, choice, circumstance, class, classification, code, colleague, combination, commitment, committee, communication, community, comparison, complexity, compromise, concentration, concept, conception, concern, conclusion, condition, conduct, conflict, consensus, consequence, consideration, constraint, construction, content, contradiction, contrast, contribution, control, convention, correlation, country, creation, crisis, criterion, criticism, culture, damage, data, debate, decision, decline, defence, definition, degree, demand, description, destruction, determination, development, difference, difficulty, dilemma, dimension, disadvantage, discovery, discrimination, discussion, distinction, diversity, division, doctrine, effect, effectiveness, element, emphasis, environment, error, essence, establishment, evaluation, event, evidence, evolution, examination, example, exception, exclusion, existence, expansion, experience, experiment, explanation, exposure, extent, extreme, fact, factor, failure, feature, female, figure, finding, force, form, formation, function, future, gain, group, growth, guidance, guideline, hypothesis, idea, identity, impact, implication, importance, improvement, increase, indication, individual, influence, information, insight, instance, institution, integration, interaction, interest, interpretation, intervention, introduction, investigation, isolation, issue, kind, knowledge, lack, learning, level, likelihood, limit, limitation, link, list, literature, logic, loss, maintenance, majority, male, manipulation, mankind, material, means, measure, medium, member, method, minority, mode, model, motivation, movement, need, network, norm, notion, number, observation, observer, occurrence, operation, opportunity, option, organization, outcome, output, parallel, parent, part, participant, past, pattern, percentage, perception, period, person, personality, perspective, phenomenon, point, policy, population, position, possibility, potential, practice, presence, pressure, problem, procedure, process, production, programme, progress, property, proportion, proposition, protection, provision, publication, purpose, quality, question, range, rate, reader, reality, reason, reasoning, recognition, reduction, reference, relation, relationship, relevance, report, representative, reproduction, requirement, research, resistance, resolution, resource, respect, restriction, result, review, rise, risk, role, rule, sample, scale, scheme, scope, search, section, selection, sense, separation, series, service, set, sex, shift, significance, similarity, situation, skill, society, solution, source, space, spread, standard, statistics, stimulus, strategy, stress, structure, subject, success, summary, support, survey, system, target, task, team, technique, tendency, tension, term, theme, theory, tolerance, topic, tradition, transition, trend, type, uncertainty, understanding, unit, use, validity, value, variation, variety, version, view, viewpoint, volume, whole, work, world

D**Activation****1. Complete and comprehend.**

Write a brief summary of nominalization and how it can improve your academic English.

2. Check your understanding.

(i) Complete the following sentences using nouns from the list on page **XX**. The first letter of an appropriate verb is given in each case.

- a. The _____ (a...) of this paper is to argue globalization is good.
- b. Several _____ (e...) were conducted on the samples.
- c. A number of _____ (p...) can be drawn between the two examples.
- d. Several _____ (o...) have been involved in the research process.

(ii) Complete these sentences using an appropriate plural form from page **XX**.

- a. Please refer to the _____ at the end to see the data in more detail.
- b. There are several _____ required for success.
- c. You should put additional information in _____.
- d. The artist works in several different _____, including photography and painting.

3. Create your own.

Choose five nouns from the AKL on page **XX** which you do not know. Look up their meaning in a dictionary, and then write sentences which show your understanding of the nouns.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

How should I use verbs in academic English?



'Theater is a verb before it is a noun, an act before it is a place.'

Martha Graham (1894–1991)
American modern dancer and choreographer

A Reflection

15 of the following verbs appear more commonly in academic English than in 'general' English (i.e., they appear on the Academic Keyword List (AKL)). Which are they?

buy	cite	consider	do	emphasize	evaluate	help
investigate	induce	isolate	locate	operate	perform	
precede	quote	reinforce	say	speak	transform	yield

B Contextualization

The following passage is the introduction to an essay entitled 'To what extent is the world now globalized?' Read the passage and highlight all the verb forms you can find.

It is often argued that globalization is an unstoppable force which it is impossible to restrict. Indeed, this exact point was made by former Ghanaian Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan. A lot of research indicates that globalization now affects even very distant parts of the world. Smith (2012), for example, claims that the most undeveloped parts of the world have closer relationship with the developed world than ever before. This is supported by statistical data from many countries. This paper argues that there are now very few places in the world where globalization has not penetrated. Firstly, this essay demonstrates the degree of integration throughout the world. Secondly, it says why this is a good thing. Thirdly, it considers relevant counter-arguments.

Which verb form and voice are used here more commonly than in general English?
Answer in the box below.

C Explanation

What verb forms are most common in academic English?

►Step 14 explains the 12 **verb forms** used in English, and explains how commonly they are used. The three most common forms are identified as the **past simple**, the **present perfect** and the **present simple**. Of these verb forms, the present simple is by far the most commonly used in academic English. In fact, the present simple is the basic verb form of all academic writing and speaking. If unsure about which form to use, the present simple should be your default option. Some of the specific occasions when the present simple is used in academic English include:

1. **Making general statements and to giving general facts**

It [Globalization] ... is ... impossible to restrict.

2. **Reporting what other people have said**

Smith (2012), for example, claims that ...

3. **Giving evidence and support to your position**

A lot of research indicates that globalization ...

4. **Presenting a **thesis statement** (the central argument in your essay)**

This paper argues that ...

5. **Presenting an outline**

Firstly, this essay demonstrates ... It says ... It considers ...

What voice is most common in academic English?

As outlined in ►Step 15, the **active voice** is far more common in English than the **passive voice**. This is true in academic English as well as general English. However, the frequency of the passive is higher in academic English than general English.

Top Tip:

Although the passive voice is more common in academic English, do not overuse it. If you do, your writing may sound boring and not be very interesting for the reader.



There are three main reasons for this:

1. **In academic English, long **noun phrases** are often used (►Steps 9 and 10).** If these are the subject of the sentence, they would normally appear towards the beginning of that sentence. In some cases, this would make the sentence difficult to understand. As such, it may sometimes make more sense to use the passive voice instead.

Indeed, this exact point was made by... (not: Former Ghanaian Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan makes ...)

2. **In academic English, the **what** is often more important than the **who**.** Since the *who* is often in the **subject** position of a sentence, and the *what* is in the **object** position, these may be swapped around. In many types of academic writing, this may be particularly prevalent, for example in a methodology section.

This is supported by statistical data from many countries. (not: Statistical data from many countries support this.)

What verbs are commonly used in academic English?

The following verbs are taken from the **AKL**, discussed on page **XX**:

accept, account (for), achieve, acquire, act, adapt, adopt, advance, advocate, affect, aid, aim, allocate, allow, alter, analyze, appear, apply, argue, arise, assert, assess, assign, associate, assist, assume, attain, attempt, attend, attribute, avoid, base, be, become, benefit, can, cause, characterize, choose, cite, claim, clarify, classify, coincide, combine, compare, compete, comprise, concentrate, concern, conclude, conduct, confine, conform, connect, consider, consist, constitute, construct, contain, contrast, contribute, control, convert, correspond, create, damage, deal, decline, define, demonstrate, depend, derive, describe, design, destroy, determine, develop, differ, differentiate, diminish, direct, discuss, display, distinguish, divide, dominate, effect, eliminate, emerge, emphasize, employ, enable, encounter, encourage, enhance, ensure, establish, evaluate, evolve, examine, exceed, exclude, exemplify, exist, expand, experience, explain, expose, express, extend, facilitate, fail, favour, finance, focus, follow, form, formulate, function, gain, generate, govern, highlight, identify, illustrate, imply, impose, improve, include, incorporate, increase, indicate, induce, influence, initiate, integrate, interpret, introduce, investigate, involve, isolate, label, lack, lead, limit, link, locate, maintain, may, measure, neglect, note, obtain, occur, operate, outline, overcome, participate, perceive, perform, permit, pose, possess, precede, predict, present, preserve, prevent, produce, promote, propose, prove, provide, publish, pursue, quote, receive, record, reduce, refer, reflect, regard, regulate, reinforce, reject, relate, rely, remain, remove, render, replace, report, represent, reproduce, require, resolve, respond, restrict, result, retain, reveal, seek, select, separate, should, show, solve, specify, state, stimulate, strengthen, stress, study, submit, suffer, suggest, summarize, supply, support, sustain, tackle, tend, term, transform, treat, undermine, undertake, use, vary, view, write, yield.

What reporting verbs are commonly used in academic English?

There is a particular group of verbs which are commonly used in academic English called **reporting verbs**. The function of these verbs is to talk about what experts and scholars have written about a subject. Commonly used reporting verbs include *state*, *argue*, *demonstrate* and *suggest*. There are three key reasons for using such verbs in academic English:

- It shows that you have read, analyzed and synthesized a range of sources, indicating you have a broad understanding of the subject area;
- It shows that you have considered these sources critically – i.e., in an **analytical** way, rather than just **descriptive**.
- It shows that you are academically responsible – that you are not **plagiarizing**, and that you are trying to represent others' views fairly.

One important factor to understand when using reporting verbs is that they can show weaker, neutral or stronger positions. Examples of this can be seen in the table below. The verbs appear in the 3rd person singular form of the present simple, which is the most common form they would appear in for academic writing.

Function	Weaker position	Neutral position	Stronger position
Agreement	<i>concedes</i>	<i>accepts</i>	<i>supports</i>
Disagreement	<i>doubts</i>	<i>disagrees</i>	<i>refutes</i>
Opinion	<i>claims</i>	<i>believes</i>	<i>asserts</i>
Suggestion	<i>alleges</i>	<i>proposes</i>	<i>recommends</i>

D

Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

The present simple is the most commonly used verb form in academic English. Identify the five main uses from Part C.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. Check your understanding.

(i) **Make the verbs in the following sentences passive so that they sound more academic.**

- a. Many scholars have already discussed these arguments.

- b. Many famous politicians from all over the world quote Shakespeare.

- c. We assume that each of the research articles has been properly analyzed.

(ii) **Complete the following sentences using verbs from the list on page XX. The first letter of an appropriate verb is given in each case. You should use the correct form of the present simple, past simple or present perfect.**

- a. The data _____ (a...) and revealed the following key points.
- b. This paper _____ (e...) a link between the First and Second World Wars.
- c. My essay _____ (s...). I cannot change it now!
- d. The argument in this paper _____ (d...) from Smith (2010) in several ways.

3. Create your own.

Look back at the five main uses of the present simple identified in Exercise 1. Write an example sentence for each.

Use	Example sentence
(a)	
(b)	
(c)	
(d)	
(e)	

What other constructions are commonly used in academic English?



'Whom is a word that was invented to make everyone sound like a butler.'

Calvin Trillin (1935–)

American journalist, humorist, food writer, poet, memoirist and novelist

A Reflection

Look at the phrases 1–5, which are common in academic English. Match these phrases with their grammatical construction a–e.

1. Given that ...	a. <i>It</i> + present perfect passive + <i>that</i> relative clause
2. It is likely that ...	b. <i>It</i> + modal verb + passive infinitive + relative clause
3. As a result of ...	c. <i>It is</i> + adjective + <i>that</i> relative clause / infinitive
4. It has been found that ...	d. Preposition (+ article) + noun + <i>of</i>
5. It can be seen that ...	e. Past participle + <i>that</i> relative clause

B Contextualization

Read the academic passage below. Find a further example of each of the five grammatical constructions listed above.

It has been suggested that climate change is the biggest issue facing the world. Certainly, it is clear that the relationship between people and their environment is delicate. In terms of evidence which demonstrates that people are responsible for climate change, scientists talk about melting glaciers and deforestation. It could be argued that too much damage has already been done. However, provided that governments work quickly, permanent damage to the environment can still be avoided.

Structure	Example
a. <i>It</i> + present perfect passive + <i>that</i> relative clause	It has been suggested that ...
b. <i>It</i> + modal verb + passive infinitive + relative clause	

c Explanation

Why is it important to think of language as phrases and not just individual words?

Hopefully, by this stage of the book, you have realized that to use grammar well, you need to think at more than just the word level. This is particularly true in academic or formal English, where there are a number of **phrases** which are commonly used. If you know how these phrases are constructed, you can think about which words you can change in order to make new phrases.

What are ten common grammatical constructions used in academic English?

It is important to emphasize that good academic grammar does not have to be complicated. In fact, it is often simple and easy to understand. A good way to ensure that your academic grammar is both accurate and appropriate for the academic context is to use the 'frames' identified below. To gain a better understanding how each of the example phrases are used in an academic context, search for them online (e.g., on Google Scholar), and look at them in context. Ten common frames are given below, along with three examples of phrases which follow the pattern. If other common examples exist, they are also given in italics.

1. **Article + noun + preposition (+ noun)**

Note: you can also make these phrases more complex by adding **adjectives** before the nouns.

- *The key reason for the high failure rate was that people did not revise.*
- *The number of participants in the survey was extremely high.*
- *A use of the equation is as follows: ...*

Other common phrases include *the role of*; *the end/beginning of*; *the relationship between*; and *the results of*.

2. **It + past simple/present perfect passive + that relative clause**

- *It has been suggested that climate change is the biggest issue facing the world.*
- *It has been found that people with good English skills get paid more.*
- *It has been seen that an increasing number of people have cell phones.*

3. **It + modal verb + passive infinitive + relative clause**

This kind of construction is commonly used for the purpose of hedging.

- *It could be argued that too much damage has already been done.*
- *It might be suggested that there are better ways to do that.*
- *It can be seen that millions of people still suffer from this disease.*

4. **It is + adjective + that relative clause / infinitive**

- *... it is clear that the relationship between people and their environment is delicate.*
- *It is possible that the research methodology was incorrect.*
- *It is necessary to highlight the importance of these data.*

5. **~ing form + preposition**

- **Turning to** the issue of economic liberalization ...
- **Looking at** the reasons for this ...
- **Focusing on** the suggestions made ...

6. **~ing form + noun**

- **Considering the response** by the government ...
- **Regarding the decision made** ...
- **Accepting the conclusion** ...

7. **Preposition (+ article) + noun + of**

- **In terms of evidence** which demonstrates that people are responsible for climate change ...
- **As a result of** these changes, improvements will follow.
- **In the context of** sub-Saharan Africa, this was significant.

Other such phrases include: *on the basis of*; *at the beginning / end of*; *in the case of*.

8. **Preposition (+ article) + noun + other preposition**

Whilst this kind of phrase more commonly ends with *of* (see above), other prepositions are also possible.

- **In order to** develop, you need to do more training.
- The two groups were similar **with respect to** number, age and sex.
- There are many criticisms to be made **in relation to** this presentation.

9. **Past participle + that relative clause**

- ... **provided that** governments work quickly, permanent damage to the environment can still be avoided.
- **Given that** the results were disappointing, the experiment was repeated.
- **Granted that** this has never been done before, it is a risk.

10. **Miscellaneous lexical bundles**

In addition to the above, the following 'lexical bundles' (groups of words which commonly appear together) are very frequent in academic English. However, they do not follow any of the specific patterns outlined above.

- **One of the most important** reasons for this is ...
- **Part/Some/Most of the** data could not be used.
- **There is a** solution, but I just cannot identify it.

How can I use the Internet to check whether my academic phrases are commonly used?

When you write a multi-word phrase, you may not be confident that it really exists. And, if you get just one small part of the phrase wrong, it may make no sense to the reader. In order to check whether your phrase really does exist, you could type it into a search engine in quotation marks and see how many hits it receives. The higher the number of hits, the more likely it is to be a real phrase. Equally, if the search engine returns only a few hundred hits, you can conclude that this phrase is not a common English phrase (and has been misused by non-native speakers).



Activation

1. Complete and comprehend.

Why is it important to know these common academic phrases?

--

Write down as many phrases as you can remember which have the following structure.

Article + noun + preposition (+ noun)	<i>~ing</i> form + preposition
<i>~ing</i> form + noun	Miscellaneous lexical bundles

2. Check your understanding.

Complete the sentences below with an appropriate phrase from pages **XX–YY**.

- Globalization may cause _____ the ‘third world’, but I doubt it.
- He got the job _____ his experience.
- _____ the findings by Smith (2015) are inaccurate.
- _____ this is not his area of expertise, I doubt his findings.
- I would be interested to see _____ this study to see whether I agree or disagree.

3. Create your own.

Choose five phrases from Part C which you are unfamiliar with and look them up online in order to gain a better understanding of how they work. Then write five sentences which show the phrase being used in context.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

What are the key points about grammar to remember?



'Go on till you come to the end; then stop.'

Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

English writer, mathematician and logician

A Reflection

Which of the following statements about using grammar are true and which are false? If you do not understand some of the key words, look them up in the Glossary at the back of the book.

Statement	True	False
There are some differences between academic grammar and the grammar of 'general English'.		
Your mother tongue has no influence on your grammar.		
Structure words are a group of words which show the relationship between content words (e.g., nouns and verbs).		
You should try to identify the specific areas where you have grammatical problems, and try to improve them.		
Native speakers never make mistakes in their grammar.		

B Contextualization

Complete the gaps in the sentences below with appropriate words from the box. You will not need to use every word.

active	clauses	conjunctions	connectors	content
negative	object	passive	phrases	punctuation
questions	sentences	structure	subject	verb

- ☐ The normal word order of English is _____ - _____ - _____.
- ☐ There are two voices in English: the _____ and the _____.
- ☐ Words can be combined to form _____, which in turn can be combined to make _____, which in turn can be combined to make _____.
- ☐ Sentences can be joined together by _____ and _____.
- ☐ Prepositions and articles are examples of _____ words, while nouns and verbs are examples of _____ words.

C Explanation

An A–Z Guide to Grammar

The following list is an A–Z of key points about grammar raised in this book. Where relevant, steps where these points are discussed in more detail are given.

Academic grammar can be different to the grammar of ‘general’ English.

- For example, **nouns** and **noun phrases** are more frequent in academic English. In terms of verbs, whilst the **present simple** is quite commonly used in general English, it is extremely common in academic English. (►Steps 46–49)

Building blocks – how different ‘bits’ of language stick together.

- One rule to remember is: words make **phrases**, phrases make **clauses**, and clauses make **sentences**. (►Steps 26–29)

Confidence – practise to develop it.

- The best way to develop the confidence to use grammar effectively is to use it regularly.

Determiners are sometimes forgotten about, but they are very important.

- At least one determiner, such as an **article**, **quantifier**, **demonstrative** and **possessive**, appears in almost every single English sentence. Despite their importance in clarifying meaning, and their frequency in English, they are a commonly misunderstood part of speech. (►Step 23)

Ensure you are clear about the differences between spoken and written grammar.

- Spoken and written grammar use slightly different **genres**. (►Step 5)

Function: always know what you are trying to say.

- Before you know what kind of grammar you need, you need to know what you are trying to say. The grammatical choices you make should be directly influenced by what you want to say.

Grammar shows the relationship between words.

- Grammar is not something ‘abstract’ – it is a real, living, breathing thing. When making choices about grammar, think about the relationship between words.

High-frequency grammar is a good place to focus your attention.

- To build your confidence, and to be more effective in using grammar, it makes sense to focus on grammatical forms which are used most frequently – e.g., commonly used **verb forms**.

Identify the areas where you have problems and try and improve.

- People generally know (or at least suspect) the grammatical areas in which they are weak. Instead of ignoring them, try and do something about it!

Join clauses and sentences together with **connectors** and **conjunctions**.

- Such **linking words** can improve the **coherence** and **cohesion** of your speaking and writing. (►Step 21)

Keep a record of grammatical mistakes you regularly make.

- If you do this, you will know the areas you need to work on.

Learn about punctuation to ensure that your writing is clear.

- Punctuation has an important role to play in shaping your writing. (►Steps 41–45)

Mistakes are natural – try not to worry about making them.

- Remember how you learnt your **native language** as a child – you made many mistakes. To develop the range and accuracy of your grammar, you should try to speak and write as much as possible.

No!

- Negative words tend to be very short, and when reading they may sometimes be missed. However, they are important because they completely change the meaning of a sentence. (►Step 34)

Only use emphatic grammar if you really want to emphasize something.

- If you are making a normal statement, then just use normal grammar. Many grammatical mistakes arise from trying to be too complicated. (►Step 39)

Possibility and probability – know what you think.

- When using grammar, consider whether you need to make your statement stronger (and use an **intensifier**) or weaker (and use **hedging language**). (►Step 31)

Questions, questions ...

- There are many different ways of asking **questions** in English. It is important to know the different ways of doing this. (►Steps 26–29)

Realize that **native speakers** of English sometimes make mistakes too.

- So don't worry if you sometimes make some grammatical mistakes. Whilst you should try to ensure your grammar is as accurate as possible, the key is to be understood.

Structure words and content words.

- Content words (especially nouns and verbs) carry the meaning of language; structure words (e.g., **prepositions**, determiners and conjunctions) show the relationship between these words.

Think in groups of words, not individually.

- Your grammar is likely to be more accurate and do what you want it to do if you think about it in 'chunks' rather than individual words.

D**Activation****1. Complete and comprehend.**

Why were the following mentioned on the previous two pages?

a. Declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamative	
b. Phrases, clauses and sentences	
c. Articles, demonstratives, quantifiers and possessives	

2. Check your understanding.

Answer the following questions in your own words.

a. How can understanding your own language better help your English?	
b. Why should you try to think in groups of words, rather than thinking of them individually?	
c. Why should you avoid complicated grammar?	
d. Why is it ok to make mistakes in your grammar?	

3. Create your own.

Now you have finished the book, write down five ways in which you can ensure you continue to improve your grammar.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

ANSWERS

Step 1, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Students' own answers.

2. Check your understanding.

1. e 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. d

3. Create your own.

2. Full stops are needed at the end of a sentence. This is important.
3. The use of positive forms makes your English clearer.
4. It is confusing to use longer noun phrases at the start of a sentence.
5. Do not use informal grammar in written English.

Step 2, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- i. See pages XX-YY.
- ii. (a) adjective (b) preposition (c) conjunction (d) pronoun (e) adverb (f) verb

2. Check your understanding.

computer–noun; *justify*–verb; *fasten*–verb; *fast*–adjective, adverb; *development*–noun;
around–adverb, preposition, adjective; *while*–noun, conjunction; *some*–adjective, pronoun

3. Create your own.

- (a) compute (b) colourful (c) cleaner (d) speciality and specialize (e) refuse (f)
miserable (g) obviously
(h) clearly

Step 3, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

1. C 2. D 3. E 4. A 5. B

2. Check your understanding.

1. c 2. d 3. e 4. a 5. b

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

Could you answer your phone as it is ringing?

Answer the phone. It's ringing!

She answered her phone while it was ringing.

Step 4, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- a. subject-verb-object / passive voice
- b. ~s / ~ed
- c. irregular / there are many to choose from, e.g., *be, have, do, say, make, go, take, come, see and get*.
- d. five / eat, eats, ate, eaten, eating

2. Check your understanding.

- b. Misused article – *I went to London last year*.
- c. Treating an irregular verb like a regular verb – *He fell over in the street*.
- d. Inappropriate question form – *Do you like playing football?*
- e. Preposition used incorrectly (possibly because they do not exist in the mother tongue) – *I am helping my mother*.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 5, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See answers on pages **XX-YY**.

2. Check your understanding.

- b. spoken/informal
- c. written/formal
- d. spoken/informal
- e. spoken/informal
- f. spoken/formal

3. Create your own.

- b. She will definitely like it.
- c. Hi, this is what I think about what you said.
- d. It's an amazing film. You should see it.
- e. He chose to eat chocolate.
- f. My talk today is going to look at Europe.

Step 6, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

1. False – nouns are content words, and an open class.
2. True.
3. True – around twice as common (c. 30% of words).
4. False – they can have many senses.
5. True.
6. True, especially adjectives and other nouns.
7. False – they only have a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence, but generally not in the rest of a sentence.

2. Check your understanding.

- e.g., *children* (more than one child), *childhood* (the state of being a child) and *childminder* (a person whose job is to look after children).
- Many possible – e.g., group, scenery, part of a tennis match.
- modesty, patience, formality, carelessness.
- See Step 8.

3. Create your own.

- The rich are getting richer.
- I spoke to the receptionist.
- He had a serious illness.
- I have just had a haircut.

Step 7, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- See the text on pages XX–YY.
-

Subject pronoun	Object pronoun	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive pronoun
I	me	mine	myself
you	you	yours	yourself / yourselves
he	him	his	himself
she	her	hers	herself
it	it	its	itself
we	us	ours	ourselves
they	them	theirs	themselves

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) our (b) she (c) him (d) mine (e) ourselves

3. Create your own.

Model answer:

The World Cup is a football tournament **which** is played every four years. **It** was first played in 1930. Brazil are the most successful side, having won the World Cup five times. Italy have won **it** four times. In addition, **they** have both been runners-up twice. **This** is an amazing fact, since all the other countries have only won **it** ten times in total.

Step 8, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- Examples of nouns which show the differences in terms of ‘countability’ between languages. In many languages, these nouns would be countable, but not in English.
- When using nouns, it is important to use them in the correct way. Although *hair* can be both countable and uncountable, on most occasions it would make sense to use it in its uncountable sense.
- These are all nouns which can be used in a countable or uncountable way.

- d. These words were used to show how 'countable' phrases can be used with uncountable nouns.
- e. *Coffee* was used to show how sometimes 'countable' phrases are left out by native speakers.

2. Check your understanding.

I like **many** different foods from all over the world, although I prefer the food of **some** countries more than others. In particular, I like Italian food, especially pasta. There are two **types of** pasta which I really love: spaghetti and fusilli. I like to eat it with **a couple of glasses of** wine. When I don't have **lots of** work to do, I like to cook, although my wife thinks I use too much salt – but I only put in **two or three teaspoons of** it. That's **not much**.

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

- i.
 - a. How much equipment is in your gym?
 - b. Could you give me a few sheets of paper please?
 - c. There were lots of people at the match.
- ii.
 - a. She drank five glasses of water.
 - b. How many litres of air can you hold in your lungs?
 - c. There were no litres of petrol in the car.

Step 9, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See Step 9 for details.

2. Check your understanding.

- a. Frozen swimming pool = past participle + gerund + noun
- b. Worrying global situation = present participle + adjective + noun
- c. Water's boiling point = Possessive noun + present participle + noun
- d. My aunt's recently sold house = possessive phrase + adverb + adjective + noun

3. Create your own.

A happy married couple
 A beautiful gold clock
 A bicycle's black wheel
 A badly injured football player

Step 10, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- a. *Which / that* are used to refer to **things** and **objects**. **That** is more common than **which**.
- b. *Where, when* and *why* can be used in relative clauses, referring respectively to **place**, **time** and **reason**.
- c. When using an infinitive after a noun, it may come in the active or **passive** voice.
- d. If your noun phrases are too **long**, they will be difficult to follow and understand. Make them **complex**, but not complicated.
- e. Noun phrases are more common in **written** rather than **spoken** English.

2. Check your understanding.

- i.
 - a. in the corner
 - b. different
 - c. of the cinema
 - d. whose books are on the table
 - e. to help me learn English
 - f. written by my father
- ii.
 - a. noun + prepositional phrase
 - b. noun + adjective
 - c. noun + of + noun
 - d. noun + relative clause
 - e. noun + infinitive
 - f. noun + past participle

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 11, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- i.
 - The past, present and future.
 - The continuous, simple, perfect and perfect continuous.
- ii.

Base form	Present simple, 3 rd person singular	Past simple	Past participle	Present participle
call	calls	called	called	calling
give	gives	gave	given	giving
want	wants	wanted	wanted	wanting
use	uses	used	used	using
try	tries	tried	tried	trying
tell	tells	told	told	telling

2. Check your understanding.

Sentence (with correction)	Type or mistake
He think thinks about football all the time.	Lack of agreement. Missing 3 rd person ~ s
You were will be travelling all day tomorrow, so go to bed now.	Wrong tense used (future rather than past needed)
I am being am forty years old.	Wrong aspect used (simple rather than continuous needed)
She had gone before he arrived.	Missing auxiliary verb

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

Positive: He is going later today.

Negative: He is not going until tomorrow.

Question: Is he going later?

Negative question: Why is he not going until tomorrow?

Step 12, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See the Glossary at the back of the book.

2. Check your understanding.

i.

Verb	Regular	Irregular	Transitive	Intransitive
Eat		✓	✓	✓
Go		✓		✓
Look	✓			✓
Run		✓	✓	✓
Die	✓			✓

ii.

My friend Alan **has been learning** English for five years. Although he **likes learning** English, he **prefers** watching TV. He **definitely doesn't work / isn't working** hard enough. As a result, I think he **may fail** his exams next year.

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

b. She can come later.

c. They have been coming here for many years.

d. I dislike people telling me what to do.

e. I dreamt about chocolate last night.

Step 13, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See Part C and the Glossary.

2. Check your understanding.

(a) past simple (b) past perfect (c) future continuous (d) present perfect continuous
(e) future perfect

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 14, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- b. Present simple – *generally; regularly; usually; always; never; every day/week/month/year*
- c. Present perfect (continuous) – *Since; for; until now; just; in the last year; recently; lately; already; yet*
- d. Present continuous – *today; this week / month / year; at this time; nowadays*
- e. Future simple – *tomorrow; in three years' time; next week/ month/year*
- f. Past continuous – *between X and Y; from X to Y; when; while* and past simple time words

2. Check your understanding.

- a. The first sentence talks about a complete action (i.e., Sue lived in London in the past, but she does not live there any more – she lives somewhere else); in the second sentence, the action is incomplete – Sue began living in London in the past, and she still lives there now.
- b. The first sentence is talking generally about a future event; the second sentence is making a prediction that before a certain point in the future (i.e., 10pm), they will have arrived).
- c. The first sentence is a comment about the general characteristics of Americans; the second sentence is talking about a specific, unfinished action in the present.
- d. In the first sentence, the two events occurred at the same time; in the second sentence, the 'studying of English' took place before the 'moving to London'.

3. Create your own.

- a. **I'm travelling** [present continuous]
- b. **She'd already left** [past perfect] / **I arrived** [past simple]
- c. **will be finished** [future simple]
- d. **was sitting** [past continuous] / **jumped** [past simple]
- e. **has played** [present perfect] / **saw** [past simple]
- f. **leaves** [present simple] / **will have got back** [future perfect]

Step 15, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

As in text.

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) passive (b) active (c) passive (d) passive (e) passive

3. Create your own.

Example sentences:

- 1. Picasso **was born** in 1881.
- 2. Cubism **was invented** by Picasso.
- 3. He **was married** twice.
- 4. Much of his early life **was spent** in Paris
- 5. His paintings **are found** in many galleries around the world.

Step 16, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (a) nouns and pronouns (b) never (c) comparative (d) *large*

2. Check your understanding.

i. **Nouns:** *central; daily; skilful; sunny.*

Verbs: *comfortable; creative; expectant; permitted; urgent*

ii. **~al:** relating to; **~esque:** like, similar to; **~ful:** full of; **~ish:** like; **~less:** without

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 17, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

(a) all of the above (b) where they can add value (c) generally (d) important

2. Check your understanding.

i.

b. I strongly agree with you about this issue.

c. The cost was about \$100.

d. You have to apply independently.

e. Simone applied jointly for the bank account with Imran.

iii. b) surprisingly (c) clearly, definitely (d) completely

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 18, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See table on page XX.

2. Check your understanding.

(a) False (b) True (c) True (d) False

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

a. The United States of America is richer than India.

b. London is the largest city in the United Kingdom.

c. My best friend is cleverer than me.

d. Football is the most popular sport in the world.

Step 19, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Initial position: *ideally, consequently, similarly*

Mid position: *seldom, definitely, obviously*

End position: *lazily, weekly, inside, tonight, backwards*

2. Check your understanding.

a. **Luckily**, we had enough money to get a taxi.

b. We are getting a new carpet **upstairs**.

- c. I am **probably** going to the party tonight.
- d. They telephoned me **yesterday**.
- e. I **rarely** visit them anymore.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 20, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- a. The difference between gradeable and ungradeable adjectives is **that the latter cannot be preceded by words like *very* or *quite*.**
- b. A nominal adjective is **an adjective which can be used to talk about a whole class or group of people.**
- c. Hyphens should be used in compound adjectives when **the two components cannot be separated.**

2. Check your understanding.

- a. He's a ~~very~~ unique singer.
- b. It was ~~completely~~ boiling.
- c. There are ~~much~~ many reasons for this.
- d. No correction needed.
- e. That book was ~~frightened~~ frightening.

3. Create your own.

- i.
 - b. I think the rich should pay more in taxes.
 - c. The British like to watch football.
 - d. The government should provide more support to the blind and the deaf.
- ii. Students' own answers.

Step 21, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

To show contrast / concession: *whereas; whilst; in contrast; on the other hand; but; despite; in spite of; nevertheless; yet; however*

To emphasize / highlight: *in fact; indeed; specifically*

To show a sequence / time relationship: *when; while; firstly/secondly/thirdly; after; until*

To show cause and effect: *since; because of; due to; as such; therefore; thus; for this reason; hence; accordingly*

To add information / reinforce: *besides; as well as; consequently; in addition; furthermore; moreover*

To compare: *similarly; in the same way; likewise; equally; both ... and*

To present alternatives: *alternatively / on the other hand*

To provide supporting information: *such as; to illustrate this; for example; for instance*

For transition: *regarding; with regards to; with respect to*

To summarize: *in conclusion; in summary; to conclude; to sum up*

2. Check your understanding.

The Chinese language has the most native speakers in the world, **although** English has the most total speakers (c. 1.5 billion). **For this reason**, English is the common international language of business. Several other languages, **such as** French and Japanese, **also** have more than 100 million speakers. **Whereas** the former is spoken by many people as a second language, the overwhelming majority of the latter (99%) speak it as a first language.

3. Create your own.

Sample answer:

Walt Disney is famous for making cartoons, **for example** *Dumbo*, *Snow White* and *The Jungle Book*. His films were nominated 59 times for an Oscar. **As well as** winning 22 Oscars for his films, he **also** won 4 honorary Oscars. He created many famous characters, **such as** Donald Duck, Goofy and Mickey Mouse. **Although** he was not an actor, he provided the first voice for Mickey Mouse. **With regards to** his non-TV/film interests, he opened Disneyland theme park in California in 1955. **Subsequently**, Disney World was built in Florida in 1971. Walt Disney died in 1966, aged 65, **due to** lung cancer. **In conclusion**, he had an enormous influence on **both** media **and** leisure.

Step 22, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- The three main categories of prepositions are **place and position** (e.g., *at*, *under*), **direction and movement** (e.g., *across*, *towards*) and **time** (e.g., *since*, *after*).
- Prepositions are a 'closed class' of words. This means that **no more will be created**.
- If you are unsure what prepositions to use, you should **make an intelligent guess**.
- To avoid confusion, don't use more than **three** prepositions in a sentence.

2. Check your understanding.

My favourite object is a vase given **to me by** my mother **in** 1998 **on** my 18th birthday. She gave it **to me with** a beautiful card she made herself. I have had the vase **for over** 15 years. It is made mostly **of/from** glass. I keep it **on** a shelf **in** my bedroom, **next to / by / near** a photograph **of** my family. **Before** I die, I will leave it **for** my daughter.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 23, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See explanations in book.

2. Check your understanding.

- Mistake:** Order of information – determiners should precede noun phrases.
Correction: *Did you buy **the big** house?*
 - Mistake:** an article is needed; the meaning is different with no article.
Correction: *She has **a** few grey hairs. She's getting old!*
 - Mistake:** the present continuous indicates that the action is ongoing – so the ice-cream must be nearby. The demonstrative is therefore wrong.
Correction: *I'm really enjoying **this** ice-cream.*
- (a) much (b) some / a lot of (c) both (d) that / your

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 24, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See the Glossary at the back of the book.

2. Check your understanding.

1. D 2. B 3. A 4. E 5. C

3. Create your own.

New York is **a** very interesting city. In fact, it is probably **the** most interesting city I have ever visited. Although it's not **the** biggest city in **the** world, it does feel like it sometimes! **The** Empire State Building is **an** important symbol of **the** city, as is **the** Statue of Liberty. **An** interesting fact about **the** Statue of Liberty is that it was **a** present from France, back in 1886.

Step 25, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- i. (a) determiner (b) usage (c) proper (d) countable (e) sounds
- ii.
 - a. False – **Many** geographical features require the definite article.
 - b. False – Uncountable nouns **seldom** take an article.
 - c. True.
 - d. False – Initialisms generally require *the*, while acronyms do not.
 - e. True.

2. Check your understanding.

Correct versions are as follows:

- a. Trust is very important, particularly the trust between parents and children.
- b. UNESCO and UNICEF are part of the UN.
- c. The last time you were late, we missed the film.
- d. Dogs are amazing animals.
- e. Is he still in bed? We're going to be late if he doesn't get up.

3. Create your own.

The BBC is **a** major international media organization based in **the** UK. It has many thousands of employees who work in its London headquarters. It was founded in 1922. Critics of **the** organization say that it should not get given money by **the** British government. Supporters say it provides **a** very good service.

Step 26, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

(a) See Step 4. (b) See Step 19. (c) See Step 19. (d) See Step 7.

2. Check your understanding.

See table on page **XX**.

3. Create your own.

- a. I went to the shops yesterday.
- b. She took the book from her friend.
- c. They met at the café which is next to the museum.
- d. Terry was working when his flatmate returned.
- e. The black dog ran off and got its ball.

Step 27, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- b. *He was waiting*: subject pronoun + auxiliary verb + main verb
- c. *for his food*: preposition + possessive adjective + uncountable noun
- d. *well-known*: adverb + past participle
- e. *quite quickly*: modifier + adverb

2. Check your understanding.

- a. [I have been] [to the USA] [but] [I didn't like it].
- b. [My parents] [have always supported] [me and my brother].
- c. [Your birthday present] [is going to be] [a holiday in Los Angeles].
- d. [I used to work] [in a factory] [next to a river].

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

- b. They were going; She was talking; We were running.
- c. with her friend; to their home; at her insistence
- d. brightly lit; densely populated; well-prepared

Step 28, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

An independent clause must consist of at least a **subject + verb**. They represent a thought or idea which is **complete**. As such, they **make sense** by themselves.

A dependent clause must consist of at least a **dependent marker word + subject + verb**. They represent a thought or idea which is **incomplete**. As such, they **do not make sense** by themselves.

2. Check your understanding.

Dependent clauses: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8

Independent clauses: 3, 4, 5, 9, 10

3. Create your own.

- b. This is a book whose author is very well known.
- c. Buzz Aldrin, who was born in 1930, was the second person on the moon.
- d. Could you pass me the towel that's got my name on it.
- e. That's the man whom I worked with last year.

Step 29, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See table on page XX.

2. Check your understanding.

Simple: 2, 4; Compound: 5; Complex: 1; Complex–compound: 3, 6

3. Create your own.

Simple: *I went to the park with my dog.*

Compound: *The train was delayed, so I was late for my meeting.*

Complex: *The students are studying because they have an exam.*

Complex–compound: *Although my children prefer playing sport, I suggested we go to the cinema; they wanted to play basketball instead.*

Step 30, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Problem 2: Use either a coordinating or subordinating conjunction to join the sentences, depending on the relationship between them.

Problem 3: Include a subject or verb if either is missing.

Problem 4: Ensure that sentences are clearly separated by placing a full stop (or other punctuation) between them. Alternatively, join the sentences using a coordinating or subordinating conjunction.

Problem 5: Ensure that information follows a familiar–unfamiliar (known–unknown) pattern.

Problem 6: Ensure that it is clear what nouns any pronouns used refer to, particularly in long sentences.

Problem 7: Ensure that there is good balance within the sentence, especially within lists.

Problem 8: When using modifiers, ensure that the subject of the sentence is clear, and clearly relates to the information at the beginning of the sentence.

2. Check your understanding.

Sentences **a** (problem 3), **c** (problem 4), **d** and **e** (problem 6) are incorrect.

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

a. My father likes playing basketball, whereas my mother likes playing tennis.

b. I went to the beach, the hotel and the gym. We then went to the restaurant for dinner.

c. She works in an office in the city. She mainly deals with customers.

d. Having taken his dog for a walk, Thomas fell asleep.

Step 31, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

(a) Advice (b) Regret (c) Probability (d) Fact

2. Check your understanding.

(a) must (b) can (c) couldn't (d) may / might (e) might / could have

3. Create your own.

- i.
 - a. I'd get healthier (2nd)
 - b. I'd get fired (2nd)
 - c. I'd be able to speak English (mixed 1)
 - d. I'll be tired tomorrow (1st)
- ii. Students' own answers.

Step 32, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (a) preposition / adverb (b) common / less (c) more than (d) object / separable
(e) follow

2. Check your understanding.

- a. The case brought about a change in the law.
- b. She did it without any help from her parents.
- c. The doctors carried out the operation last night.
- d. He really looks up to his elder sister.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 33, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- i. See page XX. (a) present perfect (b) present simple / present perfect (c) present continuous (d) present simple

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) after (b) as soon as / once (c) Until (d) Before

3. Create your own.

- a. point in time (e.g., *7 o'clock; half past eight*)
- b. e.g., *ten o'clock / lunchtime*
- c. e.g., *Christmas / Diwali / the weekend*
- d. length of time (e.g., *ten years; 18 months*) / year (e.g., *2005; 2014*)
- e. *used to*

Step 34, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (i) and (ii) See pages XX-YY.

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) no (b) never (c) nothing (d) nobody (e) neither (f) not (g) None

3. Create your own.

- i.
 - a. It is impossible to leave after 11 o'clock.
 - b. There is nowhere left to visit in this town.
 - c. He was so nervous, he was barely / hardly able to speak.
 - d. They know nothing.
- ii. Students' own answers.

Step 35, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Type	Structure	Type of answer expected	Example
Yes/No questions	The <u>subject</u> and the <u>first</u> auxiliary verb in the verb phrase are <u>inverted</u> .	Either <u>yes</u> or <u>no</u> .	<i>Is it raining?</i>
Wh~ questions	<u>Question</u> word (e.g., <i>why, when / where</i>) + same structure as <u>yes/no</u> question.	<u>Specific</u> information (e.g., a <u>person</u> for who, a <u>place</u> for where or a <u>reason</u> for why).	<i>Why is it raining?</i>
Question tags (QT)	Negative verb + <u>positive</u> QT / Positive verb + <u>negative</u> QT. <u>Auxiliary</u> verb is the same in both parts.	Either yes or no. If the QT has a <u>falling</u> tone, a <u>positive</u> answer is expected; if the QT <u>raises</u> , a positive answer is likely but less certain.	<i>It's raining, isn't it?</i>

2. Check your understanding.

- a. What is the capital of China?
- b. Why do you think he said that?
- c. Do you understand the answer?
- d. Did she fix her computer?
- e. That's not the answer, is it?

3. Create your own.

Sample questions:

1. When did she begin learning English? (Last year.)
2. Is the train going to be on time? (No it isn't.)
3. Where did she live before moving to London? (New York.)
4. Why did she change her clothes? (Because it was so hot.)
5. This train is going to be late, isn't it? (Yes, I think it's going to be late.)

Step 36, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- i.
 1. These are verbs which contain a sibilant sound. In the 3rd person singular of the present simple, ~es rather than ~s must be added.
 2. 'Part of a whole' words which can be followed by *of*. Singular or plural can follow depending on usage.
 3. Indefinite pronouns followed by the singular.
 4. Money / time words followed by the singular.
- ii. Students' own answers.

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) passes (b) is/are (c) was achieved (d) were / have been coming (e) is

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 37, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See pages XX-YY.

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) went / ate (b) accordingly (c) them (d) the building

3. Create your own.

Last year, I went on holiday with my parents and brother to New York. We had not been on holiday together for many years. New York is an interesting city; it has hundreds of great places to visit. These include museums, zoos and galleries. On our first day, before going to Central Park Zoo, we went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Step 38, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- b. Wrong noun – should be *coordination*.
- c. Wrong modal verb – change *should* to *may* / *might*.
- d. Wrong preposition – should be *at*.

2. Check your understanding.

- a. since
- b. the
- c. Relevant verb in the past simple – e.g., visited, saw, phoned
- d. immigrants

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 39, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See page XX for explanations.

2. Check your understanding.

- a. The thing I like the most about him is his honesty.
- b. What I enjoy the most is going out to dinner with my friends.
- c. That's the best cake I've ever eaten!
- d. My parents did enjoy going to London.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 40, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See Part A.

2. Check your understanding.

Sally **has lived** in London for three years. **Her** house is a small flat above a train station. It **has** five rooms. **It has** two bedrooms, a lounge, a kitchen and a bathroom. There **is** a lot of **furniture** in the rooms. **The** best thing about the house is the views of London **from** the window.

3. Create your own.

Sample answers:

2. Yesterday I met your friend Tom, who is a doctor.
3. I bought a new computer. It can store a lot of information.
4. I went to the doctors yesterday.

Step 41, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Note: the answers here are only suggested. You can express the same ideas with different words.

- b. ... because *well-known* is a compound adjective, coming before the noun.
- c. ... because the word *waves* is being used in a slightly unusual way here.
- d. ... to define, and provide more information about, the phrase which comes before (*de jure*).
- e. ... to indicate possession (i.e., the liberation movement was run and organized by women).
- f. ... to provide additional information about the previous noun phrase, using a non-restrictive relative clause.
- g. ... to indicate an alternative (= *and/or*).

2. Check your understanding.

- a. Comma is misplaced / missing full stop: *My mother is a teacher.*
- b. Missing question mark / no capital letter at beginning of sentence: *Do you still speak to your ex-husband?*
- c. Missing brackets / lack of use of capital letters: *The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a large TV company in the UK.*
- d. Missing comma / missing quotation mark / missing capital letter / missing apostrophe / missing question mark – *She asked, 'Have you seen my father's glasses?'*

3. Create your own.

In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to grant universal suffrage (i.e., where everyone had the right to vote); nine years later, the same occurred in Australia. In the UK, things took slightly longer. A movement called the Suffragettes, led by Emmeline Pankhurst, was founded in 1903. The Suffragettes' main demand was simple: equal political rights. This was finally achieved in 1928.

Step 42, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (a) defining (b) non-restrictive (c) dependent/subordinate (d) thousands
(e) introductory (f) series; list (g) linking (h) co-ordinating; independent (i) adjectives
(j) reporting; direct

2. Check your understanding.

Margaret Thatcher's first ministry, which took place between 1979 and 1983, [2] was very controversial. Three key events of this ministry were economic reforms, [6] the restriction of trade unions' power, [6] and going to war against Argentina. Interestingly, [5] many people think that Thatcher only won the 1983 General Election because she won this war. However, [7] others argue that her economic reforms were necessary, [8] and this is what won her the election. Since she won the election so convincingly, [3] her decisions in her second ministry were even more radical.

3. Create your own.

i. Sample answer:

In general, Margaret Thatcher's economic policy can be described as being about freedom. She believed in monetarism, an economic system where the government had little influence. Three of the main benefits of monetarism were low inflation, greater efficiency and less borrowing. However, it also caused unemployment to rise to over 3 million. Although many people lost their jobs, Thatcher still believed that her economic policy was right.

ii. Students' own answers.

Step 43, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

Usage

- They are both followed by **lower**-case letters.
- Can be useful in **dividing up long sentences**.

Function

- S-Cs show close relationships between sentences.
- Cs can be used to show many different types of relationships, e.g., **explanation, summary, definition, list and series**.

Grammar

- Semi-colons must be followed by an **independent** clause.
- Colons can be followed by a **dependent or independent clause**.

In essays

- The colon has two specific uses in academic writing – for **in-text** references and when introducing **long** quotations.

2. Check your understanding.

- Incorrect – *I'll meet you at 12:30.*
- Correct, as it is a definition.
- Incorrect – *New York is the largest city in the USA, but it is not the capital city.*
- Incorrect – *I have lots of pets: two dogs, three cats and a snake!*

3. Create your own.

- I have four exams tomorrow: Maths, English, History and Geography.
- I have to leave now; otherwise, I will miss my train.
- My diet isn't going very well: for breakfast, I ate eggs, bacon and chips; for lunch, I had a hamburger and chips; and for dinner, I ate another hamburger, more chips and some ice-cream.

Step 44, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- (a) ✓ (b) ? (c) ? (d) ✗ (e) ✗

2. Check your understanding.

- a. broke down
- b. income tax
- c. pre-existing is much more likely, although preexisting is also possible.
- d. re-covered
- e. best known
- f. kilometres

3. Create your own.

- b. Ex-President George Bush was at the event.
- c. Three-quarters of the class passed the exam.
- d. We're going on holiday in mid-May.
- e. She is my sister-in-law.
- f. I don't know much about pre-20th Century history.

Step 45, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

No.	Mistake which has been made	Correction
2	<i>m</i> has not been doubled; <i>t</i> has been doubled	commit
3	<i>d</i> has been doubled – should be single	medical
4	Incorrect plural used – it is irregular	children
5	Heterograph confusion	passed
6	Heterograph confusion	pieces
7	Incorrect plural – <i>~y</i> should change to <i>~ies</i>	parties

2. Check your understanding.

- i. Correct words:
which / parallel / difference / finally / experience / probably / height / coming / surprise / practical / interest / meant
- ii.
BrE: catalogue, emphasise, theatre
AmE: honor, criticize, liter, monolog

3. Create your own.

millennium / son / their / separate / forty / foreign / week / discuss / achieve

Step 46, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See page XX.

2. Check your understanding.

- i. Prefixes: *co~/con~*: with; *intra~*: between; *pro~*: in favour of; *uni~*: same
Suffixes: *~dom*: state of; *~holic*: love/addiction; *~illion*: large number; *~phobia*: fear of
- ii. *autocracy*: rule of one person; *megapolis*: large city; *retain*: keep hold of
- iii. e.g., *demonstration*; *Internet*; *post-dated*; *subway*

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 47, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See page XX.

2. Check your understanding.

- i. (a) aim (b) experiments (c) parallels (d) organizations
- ii. (a) appendices (b) criteria (c) parentheses (d) media

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 48, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See page XX.

2. Check your understanding.

- i.
 - a. These arguments have already been discussed by many scholars.
 - b. Shakespeare is quoted by many famous politicians from all over the world.
 - c. It is assumed that each of the research articles has been properly analyzed.
- ii. (a) was analyzed (b) establishes (c) has been submitted (d) differs

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 49, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

See pages XX–YY.

2. Check your understanding.

- (a) the end of (b) on the basis of (c) It is possible that (d) Given that (e) the results of

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Step 50, Part D

1. Complete and comprehend.

- a. They are types of sentences.
- b. These are the basic building blocks of sentences.
- c. These are determiners.

2. Check your understanding.

- a. It can help you identify why you make specific mistakes.
- b. You will minimize your mistakes.
- c. Simple grammar is just as effective.
- d. That's how the language learning process works.

3. Create your own.

Students' own answers.

Glossary

ABBREVIATION

The shortened form of a phrase, e.g., *UN* (for *United Nations*).

Related terms: acronym; initialism

ABSOLUTE ADJECTIVE

An ungradeable **adjective** where something can be described as being this way, or not – there is nowhere in between (e.g., *dead*, *unique*).

Related terms: adjective; adjective phrase; attributive-only adjective; classifying adjective; extreme adjective; predicative-only adjective

ABSTRACT NOUN

A noun that refers to an idea or general quality, not to a physical object, e.g., *love*, *art*, *beauty* and *democracy*.

Related terms: concrete noun; noun; noun phrase.

ACADEMIC KEYWORD LIST (AKL)

A corpus-based list of words which commonly appear in academic writing.

ACRONYM

An **abbreviation** formed from the initial letters of a phrase, which is commonly used as a word (e.g., *scuba*, *radar*, *UNESCO*).

Related terms: abbreviation; initialism

ACTIVE VOICE

See **voice**.

ADJECTIVE

A **word class** whose job is to describe **nouns** and **pronouns**.

Related terms: absolute adjective; adjective phrase; classifying adjective; extreme adjective; nominal adjective; ungradeable adjective; word class.

ADJECTIVE PHRASE

A **phrase** whose **head word** is an **adjective** (e.g., *very happy*).

Related terms: adjective; head word phrase

ADVERB

A **part of speech** whose function is to modify a **verb** (usually) or sometimes an **adjective** or another adverb. Adverbs in English can be

divided into different types (e.g., function, manner) and often have the **suffix** *~ly* (e.g., *quickly*, *slowly*).

Related terms: adverbial phrase; word class

ADVERBIAL PHRASE

A two-, three- or four-word term which has an **adverb** as its **main focus**.

Related terms: adverb; head word

AGENT

The part of the sentence which is the ‘doer’ of the verb.

Related term: subject

AGREEMENT

When a word changes form depending on its relationship with other words in a sentence. For example, adding *~s* for the 3rd person singular form of the **present simple**.

Related term: plural

AMERICAN ENGLISH (AME)

The variety of English spoken in the USA. In terms of writing, the differences between American and **British English** are relatively small, e.g., spelling (*~or* rather than *~our* in words like *favor* (AmE)/*favour* (BrE); *~er* rather than *~re* in words like *center* (AmE)/*centre* (BrE).

Related term: British English (BrE)

APOSTROPHE

A **punctuation** mark (') which indicates either possession (e.g., *Tom's bag*) or letters which have been left out (e.g., *They're going*).

Related terms: contraction; punctuation

ARTICLE

A type of **determiner** (*a*, *an* or *the*) which provides more information about a **noun** or **noun phrase**.

Related terms: definite article; determiner; demonstrative pronoun; indefinite article; quantifier

ASPECT

The aspect of a **verb** refers to whether an action is ongoing (unfinished) or completed.

Related terms: continuous; perfect; perfect continuous; simple; tense; verb

ATTRIBUTIVE-ONLY ADJECTIVES

Adjectives which can only come before the nouns they describe.

Related terms: predicative-only adjectives

AUXILIARY VERB

Provides additional information (specifically, related to **voice** and **tense**) about the **main verb** which follows. In addition to **modal verbs**, the main auxiliary verbs in English are be, have and do. For example, I am going or I have gone.

Related terms: main verb, modal verb

BARE INFINITIVE

The infinitive of a **verb** where to is missing (e.g., *Could you close the door*).

Related term: infinitive

BASE FORM

The **present tense** form of the verb (not including the 3rd person form).

BINOMIAL

Two words of the same word class linked by a word like *and* or *or*, which are commonly used as a phrase (e.g., *fish and chips*; *right or wrong*).

BRACKETS

A piece of **punctuation** ([()]) which shows that the information inside is less important, or is additional.

Related term: punctuation

BRITISH ENGLISH (BrE)

The variety of English used in the United Kingdom.

Related term: American English (AmE)

'BUTTERFLY EFFECT'

The idea that one tiny event at the beginning of a process can have a very large effect later on.

CAPITAL LETTER

An upper-case letter (e.g., *B, F, P*) which is used at the start of a sentence and in proper names, predominantly. Contrasts with lower-case letters (e.g., *b, f, p*).

Related term: lower-case letter

CASE

A grammatical category which shows grammatical function through **inflection**. English has now generally lost its case system.

Related term: gender

CLASSIFYING ADJECTIVE

An **adjective** used to divide **nouns** into particular groups or types (e.g., *wooden, digital*).

CLAUSE

A group of words which is composed of a **verb** and a **subject**.

Related terms: dependent clause; independent clause; phrase; sentence

CLEFT SENTENCE

A **sentence** where the information is divided or moved around for the sake of emphasis. It often begins with a phrase like *the reason why* or *the thing that*.

CLOSED WORD CLASS

Also known as functional words. This group includes word classes such as **prepositions**, **conjunctions**, **determiners** and **pronouns**. No new words can be added to this list. Contrasts with **open word class**.

Related terms: open word class; word class

COHESION

The relationship between parts of a **sentence**, which helps give it meaning. Cohesion may be either grammatical (e.g., parallel structures) or lexical (e.g., **linking words/devices**).

Related terms: coherence; linking words/devices

COHERENCE

The logical organization of a piece of writing.

Related terms: cohesion; subject-verb-object; word order

COLLECTIVE NOUN

A type of **noun** which refers to groups of people or things (e.g., *team, organisation*).

Related terms: noun; noun phrase

COLLOCATION

Where two or more words frequently appear together, e.g., *heavy smoker*. Collocations are an effective way of sounding more natural.

COLON

A piece of **punctuation** (:) which introduces lists, provides definitions and gives explanations.

Related terms: punctuation; semi-colon

COMMA

A **punctuation** mark (,) which divides a **sentence** into smaller units.

Related terms: punctuation; semi-colon

COMMON NOUN

A general class of person, place or thing – the most frequently used type of **noun** (e.g., *part, government, head*).

Related terms: noun; proper noun

COMPARATIVE

The form of an **adjective** (or **adverb**) which indicates that it has more of something than another person or object (e.g., *larger* = having more size).

Related terms: adjective; adverb; superlative

COMPLEX SENTENCE

A **sentence** which contains one **independent clause** and one **dependent clause**.

Related terms: complex-compound sentence; compound sentence; simple sentence.

COMPLEX-COMPOUND SENTENCE

A **sentence** which contains at least two **independent** clauses and at least one **dependent clause**.

Related terms: complex sentence; compound sentence; simple sentence.

COMPOUND ADJECTIVE

See *compound word*.

COMPOUND WORD

A combination of two or more words to form a single word or **phrase** (e.g., *bus stop*). Sometimes such words may be joined by a **hyphen** (e.g., *part-time*).

COMPOUND SENTENCE

A **sentence** which contains two **independent clauses**.

Related terms: complex sentence; complex-compound sentence; simple sentence

CONCRETE NOUN

A **noun** which exists physically and can be seen, heard, felt, smelt or heard (e.g., *table, cat*)

Related terms: abstract noun; noun

CONDITION VERB

A **verb** which is used with *should, would* or *could* to indicate a condition.

CONDITIONAL SENTENCE

A **sentence** which usually includes a condition **clause** and a result clause. Often such sentences include words such as *if, unless* or *when*.

CONJUGATION

Changing the **base form** of a **verb** by **inflection**, to show information such as person, number, **tense, aspect** or **voice**.

CONJUNCTION

A **word class** which links words, **phrases** or **clauses** together.

Related terms: linking words/devices; signposting language; word class

CONNECTORS

See *conjunction*.

CONTENT WORD

See *open word class*.

CONTINUOUS

The **aspect** of a **verb** which is generally used to refer to **states** and **events** which are temporary / unfinished.

Related terms: aspect; perfect; perfect continuous; simple

CONTRACTION

A shortened way of writing, generally using an **apostrophe**, e.g., *it's* is a contraction of *it is*.

Related terms: apostrophe

COORDINATING CONJUNCTION

A type of **conjunction** which links two **independent clauses** together. Common examples include *and, but, for* and *or*.

Related terms: conjunction; independent clause; linking devices; subordinating conjunction

COPULAR VERB

A type of **verb** that links a **subject** to a complement, which itself refers to the subject, e.g., *That cake smells lovely*.

COUNTABLE NOUN

A **noun** which can be preceded by a number (e.g., *one man, two chairs, 87 dogs*). Contrasts with **uncountable noun**.

Related term: uncountable noun

DASH

A **punctuation** mark (–) which shows a break in thought. It is a less formal version of a **comma**, **semicolon** or **colon**. It is commonly confused with a hyphen (-).

DECLARATIVE SENTENCE

A type of **sentence** the purpose of which is to share information, make statements and relate facts.

Related terms: exclamative sentence; imperative sentence; interrogative sentence.

DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSE

A type of **relative clause** where the information introduced by a **relative pronoun** (e.g., *which, who, whose*) is directly related to the **noun** which comes before.

Related terms: relative clause; non-defining relative clause; relative pronoun.

DEFINITE ARTICLE

The – which is generally used to show that a **noun** is specific and known.

Related terms: determiner; indefinite article

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN

The main demonstrative pronouns are *this, that, these* and *those*. These words provide additional information about the **nouns** they precede.

Related terms: cohesion; determiner

DEPENDENT CLAUSE

A **clause** which is not a complete sentence. A dependent clause must be related to an **independent clause** to form a **sentence** or to have any real meaning.

Related terms: clause, independent clause, subordinate clause; subordinating conjunction

DEPENDENT MARKER WORD

A word which introduces a **dependent clause**. There are two types of dependent marker words, namely **subordinate conjunctions** and **relative pronouns**.

Related terms: dependent clause; relative pronouns; subordinating conjunction

DETERMINER

A word used before a **noun** to indicate something specific about it. Determiners include **articles** (*a, an, the*), **demonstrative pronouns** (e.g., *that, those*) and **quantifiers** (e.g., *enough, either*).

Related terms: articles; closed word class; demonstrative pronouns, quantifiers; word class

DIRECT OBJECT

In a **sentence**, the direct object is what is acted upon (i.e., what receives the action of the **transitive verb**).

Related terms: indirect object; transitive verb

DISTRIBUTIVES

Determiners which refer to individual components of a group, not the group as a whole. They talk about a 'specific' part of a 'general' class.

Related term: determiner

DYNAMIC VERB

A **verb** which can appear in the **continuous aspect**, because it can be described as being temporary or unfinished. Contrasts with **stative verb**.

Related terms: continuous aspects; stative verb

ELLIPSIS

A **punctuation** mark (...) which denotes missing information. It is often used in quotations.

Related term: punctuation

EXCLAMATION MARK

A **punctuation** mark (!) which is used to show surprise or for emphasis.

Related term: punctuation

EXCLAMATIVE SENTENCE

A type of **sentence** the purpose of which is to talk about interesting, surprising or amazing things.

Related terms: declarative sentence; imperative sentence; interrogative sentence

EXTREME ADJECTIVE

Adjectives which cannot be graded (i.e., they cannot have very put before them). Examples includes *boiling* and *amazing*.

Related term: absolute adjective

FALLING TONE

Where your voice goes down at the end of the sentence. Contrasts with *rising tone*, where it goes up.

FORMALITY

The type of language which is used in academic writing should be formal and appropriate – for example, no slang words.

FOSSILIZATION

The process by which a grammatical mistake becomes so deep that it is very difficult to get rid of.

FULL STOP

A **punctuation** mark (.) which marks the end of a **sentence**.

Related term: punctuation

FUNCTIONAL WORD CLASS

See **closed word class**.

GENDER

The grammatical category which divides **nouns** into masculine, feminine and neuter. In modern English, gender is not very important at all.

GENRE

A type of text which contains various specific characteristics.

GERUND

The use of a **verb** as a **noun** (in its *-ing* form). For example, *I enjoy writing*.

Related term: infinitive

GRADED

See **ungradeable adjective**.

GROUP NOUN

See **collective noun**.

HEAD WORD

The main word in a phrase – the central information. For example, in the phrase *the black dog in the garden*, *dog* is the head word.

HEDGING LANGUAGE

Language which reduces the strength and directness of a particular claim, such as modal adverbs (e.g., *probably*) or particular verbs (e.g., *seem*). Hedging language is a particularly common aspect of academic writing.

Related terms: adverb, modal verb

HETEROGRAPH

A word which sounds the same as another but has a different spelling and meaning.

HYPHEN

A **punctuation** mark (-) which joins two words or two **syllables** together.

It is commonly confused with a dash (–).

Related term: punctuation

IMPERATIVE SENTENCE

A type of **sentence** the purpose of which is to give orders or tell somebody what to do (politely or impolitely).

Related terms: declarative sentence; exclamative sentence; interrogative sentence

INDEFINITE ARTICLE

A type of **determiner** which is used to introduce a non-specific / general noun – a (before a consonant sound) or *an* (before a vowel sound).

Related terms: article; definite article; determiner

INDEFINITE PRONOUN

A **pronoun** which refers to non-specific beings, objects or places (e.g., *everyone, somebody, anything, nothing*).

Related term: pronoun

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

A **clause** which can exist by itself and requires no other information to support it, in contrast to a **dependent clause**.

Related terms: clause; dependent clause; simple sentence

INDIRECT OBJECT

Some **verbs** can appear with two objects, e.g., *She sent Julia a letter*. Here, *a letter* is the **direct object** as it undergoes the action (the 'being sent'), whilst *Julia* is the indirect object.

Related terms: direct object

INFINITIVE

The **to** form of the **verb**. There are four types of infinitive in English: the **perfect** (*to have* + **past participle**), the **continuous** (*to be* + **present participle**), the **perfect continuous** (*to have been* + **present participle**) and the **passive** (*to be* + **past participle**). Sometimes an infinitive is 'bare', in that it is not preceded by *to*.

Related terms: bare infinitive; gerund

INFLECTION

A change in a word which represents a specific grammatical function (e.g., in certain languages, **suffixes** are added to the end of words instead of using **prepositions**).

Related term: preposition

INITIALISM

A type of **abbreviation** where the letters are 'said', e.g., *BBC, WHO, WWF*.

Related terms: abbreviation; acronym

INTENSIFIER

A type of **modifier** which enhances or increases the term which it relates to (e.g., *really*).

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCE

A type of **sentence** the purpose of which is to ask questions, request information and check information.

Related terms: declarative sentence; exclamative sentence; imperative sentence

INTRANSITIVE

See *transitive*.

IRREGULAR

See *regular*.

LINKING WORDS/DEVICES

Words which join text together, thereby improving both the **cohesion** and **coherence** of your writing. Linking devices are usually **adverbs** or **conjunctions**. Linking devices may join either **clauses** or **sentences**.

Related terms: adverb; clause; coherence; cohesion; conjunction

MAIN CLAUSE

See *independent clause*.

MAIN VERB

The **verb** in a **sentence** which carries the main meaning (i.e., unlike an **auxiliary verb**).

Related terms: auxiliary verb, modal verb

MID-POSITION

One of the positions in which an **adverb** can come in a sentence – either between the **subject** and the **verb**, or immediately after *be* when used as a **main verb**.

Related term: adverb

MODALITY

See *modal verb*.

MODAL VERB

A type of **auxiliary verb** which indicates either something about a speaker's opinion or attitude towards a **main verb** (e.g., *might, could, must*).

Related term: auxiliary verb

MODIFIER

A word, **phrase** or **clause** that acts like an **adjective** or **adverb**, to change or qualify the meaning of other words.

MOTHER TONGUE / NATIVE SPEAKER

The language which a person speaks from birth onwards, usually learning it from their parents.

MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCE / INTERFERENCE

The extent to which your **mother tongue** can influence the way you learn English. Often this influence is negative, although it can also be positive.

NEGATIVES

A **phrase**, **clause** or **sentence** containing a word such as *no, not, never, none* or *nothing*.

NOMINAL ADJECTIVE

An **adjective** which can be used to talk about a whole class or group of people (e.g., *the rich, the French*).

NOMINALIZATION

The process of changing other word classes into a **noun phrase**.

Related terms: noun; noun phrase

NON-DEFINING RELATIVE CLAUSE

A type of **relative clause** where the information introduced by a **relative pronoun** (e.g., which, who, whose) is additional and not key to understanding the noun which comes before.

Related terms: relative clause; defining relative clause; relative pronoun

NOUN

One of the major **words classes**, referring to a person, place or object.

Related term: word class

NOUN PHRASES

A **phrase** in which the main word is a **noun**. A **noun phrase** may have additional information before (e.g., an **adjective**) or afterwards (e.g., a **relative clause**).

Related terms: phrase; pre-modification; post-modification; relative clause

OBJECT

The part of a **sentence** which is 'acted upon' by the **subject**. For example, in the sentence *the boy kicked the ball*, *the ball* is the object.

Related terms: direct object; indirect object

OBLIQUE

A **punctuation** mark (/) meaning either / or. Alternatively known as a *slash*.

Related term: slash

OPEN WORD CLASS

Also known as 'lexical' words or 'content' words. This group includes word classes such as **nouns**, **verbs**, **adjectives** and **adverbs**. New words can be added to this list as the language develops.

Contrasts with **closed word class**.

Related term: closed word class

PARTICLE

A **function word** that has to be combined with a **content word** in order for it to have meaning (e.g., *to*, *of*).

PARTS OF SPEECH

See **word class**.

PASSIVE VOICE

See **voice**.

PAST TENSE

The **tense** in English which refers to things which are complete.

Related terms: past perfect; past simple; present tense

PAST PARTICIPLE

The third form of a **verb** (e.g., *go*, *went*, *gone*; *come*, *came*, *come*) which is used in verb forms such as the **present perfect** and the **past perfect**.

PAST PERFECT

The **verb** form which talks about a past time which occurred before another past time (e.g., *she had already left the party when you arrived*).

PAST SIMPLE

The **verb** form which talks about complete states and events (e.g., *She arrived at the party at 9 o'clock*).

PERFECT ASPECT

The **aspect** of a **verb** which indicates a state/event before a point in time. The **present perfect**, for example, talks about time before the present (e.g., *She has visited London before*).

Related terms: aspect; continuous; past perfect; perfect continuous; present perfect; simple

PERFECT CONTINUOUS

The **aspect** of a **verb** which indicates unfinished activity before a point in time (e.g., *I have been writing my essay for an hour*).

Related terms: aspect; continuous; simple; perfect

PHRASAL VERB

A verb which is composed of a main **verb** and a **particle**, usually a **preposition** (e.g., *look up* / *look into*). Formal speaking / writing tends not to use phrasal verbs, instead using one-word verbs (e.g., *search* / *investigate*).

Related term: particle; preposition

PHRASE

A group of words which constitute a single grammatical unit. Phrases can be combined to form **clauses**.

Related terms: clause; noun phrase; prepositional phrase; verb phrase

PLURAL

More than one; many.
Contrasts with *singular*.

Related term: singular

POST-MODIFICATION

Where information follows a noun (often in the form of a *relative clause*), providing more specific information about the noun.

Related terms: noun phrase; pre-modification; relative clause

PREDICATIVE-ONLY ADJECTIVES

Adjectives which can only come after the nouns they describe.

Related term: attributive-only adjectives

PREFIX

The collection of letters at the beginning of a word which may give a clue as to its meaning (e.g., *post~* = after; *re~* = again; *semi~* = half).

Related term: suffix

PRE-MODIFICATION

Where information, such as an *adjective*, comes before a *noun* to make it a more complex *noun phrase*.

Related terms: noun phrase; post-modification

PREPOSITION

A word or group of words used before a noun / pronoun to show place, position, time or method, (e.g., *at, on, in*).

Related terms: function words; inflection; phrasal verb; prepositional phrase

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

A *phrase* which has a *preposition* (or prepositions) as its main component.

Related terms: noun phrase; phrase; preposition; verb phrase

PREPOSITIONAL VERB

A type of verb made up of a main verb and one (or more) prepositions, e.g., *She talked about her project*. They are inseparable, meaning that the preposition has to appear next to the main verb.

Related terms: phrasal verb; preposition

PRESENT PARTICIPLE

Sometimes known as the *~ing* form, as it is made by using the *base form* + *~ing* (e.g., *looking, walking*). It is used in *continuous verb* forms.

Related terms: base form; continuous aspect

PRESENT PERFECT

A verb form which is used to show an event took place in the past but not at a specific time, to talk about changes over a period of time, and to show that actions / events began in the past have continued until the present.

PRESENT SIMPLE

A verb form which is used to state general truths or facts, to make generalizations, to describe repeated actions, and to indicate a future action or event which is planned or timetabled.

PRESENT TENSE

The tense in English which is used to show that states, events or actions still have a connection to the present.

Related term: past tense; present continuous; present perfect.

PRONOUN

A *word class* which is used to replace a *noun* (e.g., *she, her, hers*).

PROPER NOUN

The specific name of a person, place or thing (e.g., *London, Queen Elizabeth, Buckingham Palace*). Contrasts with *common noun*.

Related term: common noun

PUNCTUATION

The use of symbols (e.g., *commas, full stops and colons*) and spaces to help divide up and clarify the meaning of texts.

Related terms: brackets; colon; comma; full stop; hyphen; oblique/slash; question mark; quotation marks; semi-colon

QUALIFIER

A word, often an *adverb*, which increases/decreases the meaning of an adverb.

QUANTIFIER

A kind of *determiner* which precedes a *noun*, and says something about its quantity (e.g., *any, some*).

Related term: determiner

QUESTION MARK

A **punctuation** mark (?) which indicates that a question is being asked.

Related term: punctuation

QUESTION TAG

A two-word **phrase**, composed of an **auxiliary verb** and a **pronoun**, which turns a statement into a question, e.g., *She's coming later, isn't she?*

QUESTION WORD

A *wh*- word used to introduce questions, i.e., *who* (for people), *when* (time), *what* (thing, object), *why* (reason), *where* (place) *which* (choice, alternative), also *how* (method).

QUOTATION MARKS

A punctuation mark which shows the exact words somebody has said or written. Quotations marks can be single (' ') or double (" ").

REDUNDANT LANGUAGE

Language which it is not necessary to use, e.g., saying *despite the fact that* instead of *although*, or saying *general consensus of opinion* when *consensus* is sufficient.

REGULAR

A type of **verb** which follows the *-ed* pattern when forming **past** forms (e.g., *look-looked*). Irregular verbs have no obvious pattern in the way that past forms are created (e.g., *go-went*).

Related term: irregular verb; main verb

RELATIVE CLAUSE

A type of **dependent clause**, often starting with *which*, *that* or *who*, which provides additional information about a **noun phrase**.

Related terms: defining relative clause; dependent clause; non-defining relative clause; noun phrase; relative pronoun

RELATIVE PRONOUN

A word which introduces a **relative clause**. The relative pronouns used in English are *who*, *whom*, *which*, *whose* and *that*.

Related terms: defining relative clause; non-defining relative clause; pronoun; relative clause

REPORTING VERB

A verb which is used, often in academic writing, to state what writers have said (e.g., *argue*, *demonstrate*, *indicate*, *suggest*).

RHETORICAL QUESTION

A kind of question for which no answer is expected. Its main function is to highlight or emphasize a particular point (e.g., *So what is the reason for this?*) Rhetorical questions are more common in spoken English.

RIISING TONE

Where your voice goes up at the end of the sentence.

Contrasts with *falling tone*, where it goes down.

ROOT

The root is the base form of a word. It may be possible to understand the meaning of a word if you recognize a part of it. Words with the same base form are in the same word family (e.g., **noun** – *sign*; **verb** – *signify*; **adjective** – *significant*; **adverb** – *significantly*).

Related term: word class

SEMI-COLON

A **punctuation** mark (;) which has the same function as a **full stop**. It is used to show that two **sentences** have a close relationship.

Related terms: colon; full stop; punctuation

SENSE

The way in which something can be understood or interpreted. Some words can be used in different sentences.

SENTENCE

A statement which makes sense by itself. In English, a sentence must contain a minimum of a **subject** and a **verb**.

Related terms: clause; independent clause

SIBILANT

A phoneme which has a hissing sound (e.g., /s/; /ʃ/).

SIGNPOSTING LANGUAGE

Words which indicate to the reader the direction in which a text is going and can help guide them through (e.g., *as mentioned above*, *first of all*, *this said*).

Related terms: coherence; cohesion; conjunction; connector; linking words/devices

SIMPLE ASPECT

The aspect which refers to states and events which are considered to be completed (in contrast to the incomplete nature of the **continuous** aspect).

Related terms: continuous aspect; perfect aspect; perfect continuous aspect

SIMPLE SENTENCE

A **sentence** which contains one **independent clause**.

Related terms: complex sentence; complex-compound sentence; compound sentence

SINGULAR

One; single.

Contrasts with *plural*.

Related term: plural

SLASH

A **punctuation** mark (/) meaning either / or. Alternatively known as an *oblique*.

Related term: oblique

STATIC VERB

A **verb** where its forms cannot be put into the **continuous aspect**.

Contrasts with **dynamic** verbs.

STRONG FORM

The form of a vowel used when the word is being emphasized. For example, in the following sentence, the first *been* has a weak form vowel and the second has a strong form: *Have you ever been? / Have I ever been? Of course I have!*

SUBJECT

The part of the **sentence** which is 'doing' the **verb**, e.g., *The boy is kicking the ball.*

Related terms: object; subject-verb-object; word order

SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT

The basic order of words in English, as well as many other languages (e.g., Chinese, Russian, Thai).

Related terms: object; subject; word order

STYLE

The type of language / grammar which is appropriate for particular situations. The style may change depending on the level of (in) formality expected.

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE

See **dependent clause**.

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION

A **conjunction** which links a **dependent clause** to an **independent clause**. Common examples include *although*, *because*, *until* and *while*.

Related terms: conjunction; coordinating conjunction; independent clause; subordinate clause

SUFFIX

A group of letters added to the end of a word to make a new word, such as *-ness*, *-ly*, *-ive* etc.

Related term: prefix

SUPERLATIVE

The form of an adjective (or **adverb**) which demonstrates that no object has a higher degree / quantity (e.g., the *biggest* / *longest* / *most interesting*).

Related term: comparative

SYLLABLE

A group of letters which in English contains one vowel sound. For example, the word *understand* contains three syllables – *un / der / stand*.

SYNONYM

A word which has a similar (but usually not exactly the same) meaning as another. For example, synonyms of *happy* include *cheerful*, *pleased* and *joyful*.

SYNTAX

The rules which govern the grammar of **sentences**, focusing on aspects such as grammar and **word order**.

Related term: word order

THESIS STATEMENT

The sentence in an academic essay which provides the central argument. It is usually found in the introduction.

TIME WORDS

Words which indicate the time something occurred or will occur (e.g., *yesterday*, *tomorrow*, *three days ago*, *before*). Understanding time words can help with understanding **tense** and **verb forms** better.

TOPIC SENTENCE

The sentence which provides an overview of the whole paragraph. The topic sentence is usually the first sentence in a paragraph.

TRANSITIVE VERB

A type of verb which requires both a **subject** and a **direct object** (e.g., *give, eat, see*). **Intransitive** verbs, however, require no object (e.g., *sleep, arrive, sit*).

Related terms: direct object; intransitive verb; object

UNCOUNTABLE NOUN

A noun which cannot be preceded by a number (i.e., it cannot be counted). Examples include *air, water, flour*. Contrasts with **countable noun**.

Related term: abstract noun; countable noun

UNGRADEABLE ADJECTIVE

Certain adjectives cannot be 'graded', essentially meaning that they cannot be preceded by words like *very* or *quite*.

Related term: gradeable adjective

VERB

The **word class** which shows action, existence or occurrence.

Related terms: auxiliary verb; main verb

VERB PHRASE

A **phrase** whose main component is a verb.

Related terms: noun phrase, prepositional phrase

VOICE

There are two voices in English – the active and the passive. The active is by far the most common, but in academic English, the passive is used frequently as well. Verbs which are in the active voice follow the **subject-verb-object** word order. The passive, however, follows an object-verb-(subject) order.

Related term: subject-verb-object

VOWEL

A type of sound in English where there is a constant flow of air through the vocal tract. Contrasts with **consonant**.

Related term: consonant

WEAK FORM

See **strong form**.

WORD CLASS

A group of words which have the same grammatical properties. The major words classes in English are nouns, **verbs**, **adjectives**, **adverbs**, **prepositions**, **conjunctions** and **pronouns**.

WORD ORDER

The order in which words appear in a **sentence**. For example, in English, prepositions precede nouns, and **auxiliary verbs** come before **main verbs**.

Related terms: auxiliary verb; preposition; subject-verb-object; syntax